Operation Noble Eagle–Pacific
Integrated Air and Missile Defense for America’s Pacific Homeland
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Abstract

The US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) is tasked with deterring and preparing for a potential conflict with China, while also facing a clear threat from North Korea (DPRK) against the American Pacific homeland. To address mounting cooperation among adversaries, the US should establish a designated homeland defense operation, enabling USINDOPACOM to activate Joint Task Force–Homeland Defense, augment its forces with Reserve component units, and enhance regional defense capabilities. These measures would mitigate risk in a China scenario and reaffirm US sovereignty in the Pacific. With further DPRK missile and nuclear tests expected, launching this operation would be a proportionate response. The Secretary of Defense must now direct planning for Operation Noble Eagle–Pacific.

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Since 1898, Guam has stood as the westernmost sovereign territory of the United States. Known as “Where America’s day begins,” this island is home to approximately 170,000 voting citizens and 6,400 active-duty US service members.\(^1\) Positioned within the reach of North Korean (DPRK) and Chinese (PRC) conventional and nuclear missiles, Guam is deemed a prime target in any conflict scenario, serving as the joint force’s primary logistics hub in the western Pacific.

Recognizing its vulnerability, US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) has called for significant investment in Guam’s defenses. Congress answers this call through the Pacific Deterrence Initiative (PDI), supplementing traditional service acquisitions, operations and maintenance, and military construction appropriations. However, while the PDI allocates necessary investments across the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) to deter the PRC, it fails to provide resources swiftly enough to counter the imminent threat posed to Guam by the DPRK’s unrestrained missile test program and escalating hostility.\(^2\)

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In light of this pressing concern, this article advocates for the Secretary of Defense to establish a named operation aimed at bolstering Guam’s defense through the mobilization of Reserve component forces and manpower. Additionally, it proposes the formation of an international coalition dedicated to pursuing a globally integrated layered defense strategy. Such initiatives serve to convey to all potential adversaries that the American Pacific homeland is inseparable from our sovereignty and will be vigorously defended as such.

**America’s Pacific Homeland**

Despite the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) persistent efforts to depict the United States as an external entity meddling in Asian affairs, the fact remains that Guam has been a US territory for more than 126 years—significantly longer than the existence of the PRC. Operating as an unincorporated organized territory, Guam shares a status akin to that of Puerto Rico. Governed under the Guam Organic Act of 1950, Guamanians were conferred American citizenship and are represented by a delegate in the US House of Representatives. Although the delegate cannot participate in floor votes, they possess full rights and privileges within committees, including the ability to sponsor bills and question witnesses.

Adjacent to Guam lies the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Emerging from the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in the aftermath of World War II, the Northern Mariana Islands opted to become an unincorporated organized territory of the United States in 1986. With a population of roughly 56,000 residents, they too hold US citizenship and are represented by a delegate in Congress, like Puerto Rico and Guam.

The 2022 *Missile Defense Review* unequivocally asserts, “Within the context of homeland defense, an attack on Guam or any other U.S. territory by any adversary will be considered a direct attack on the United States, and will be met with an appropriate response.” However, it is essential to recognize that USINDOPACOM also bears the responsibility of safeguarding the domestic population and critical infrastructure of the sovereign nations comprising the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau, collectively

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known as freely associated states (FAS), as outlined in the Compact of Free Association (COFA). \(^5\)

Under the COFA, the United States maintains the authority to establish military bases within the FAS and make decisions concerning their external security. A notable instance is the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site situated at US Army Garrison–Kwajalein Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which serves as a hub for missile testing and launches, as well as space reconnaissance and surveillance operations for the Department of Defense (DOD) and various other government agencies. \(^6\)

In return for this partnership, the FAS benefit from US security assurances and economic assistance. \(^7\) While not American citizens, FAS citizens hold the privilege to work in the United States as “habitual residents” and are eligible to enlist in the US military. Through the COFA, the United States undertakes the responsibility of defending an additional 200,000 individuals and more than 1,000 islands and atolls as if they were American sovereign territory. Consequently, Guam, the CNMI, and the FAS collectively constitute America’s “Pacific Homeland.”

**A Clear and Present Danger**

Home to Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Base Guam, Guam finds itself closer to Pyongyang and Beijing than to Hawai‘i. With assured access to US soil, Guam and the CNMI emerge as pivotal logistics and operational hubs in any crisis or conflict scenario unfolding in the western Pacific. \(^8\)

Approximately 25 percent of Guam’s land is under the ownership of the DOD, hosting a contingent of 6,400 active-duty service members. This military presence is poised for significant expansion later this year, as the first of approximately 5,000 Marines and their families prepare to transfer from Okinawa, Japan, under the provisions of the Defense Policy Realignment Initiative (DPRI).

The strategic significance of Guam does not elude our adversaries. In 2017, Kim Jong-un issued a threat to “interdict the enemy forces on major military bases on Guam and to signal a crucial warning to the U.S.” by proposing to create “enveloping fire” through the launch of four mid-range ballistic missiles over Japan, intend-

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\(^8\) Tilghman, Guam, 2.
ing for them to land within 18 to 24 miles of Guam. While Pyongyang has not reiterated this explicit threat, the DPRK persists in testing missiles at an unprecedented rate, conducting at least 36 tests in 2023 alone. Additionally, the regime is in the process of rewriting its constitution, designating South Korea as its principal enemy, thereby ushering in a period of renewed tension on the Korean Peninsula.

While not an immediate threat, Beijing comprehends the pivotal role Guam plays in America’s forward posture and its capacity to project power into the western Pacific, particularly in a Taiwan scenario. Introduced in 2016, the Dong Feng-26, dubbed the “Guam Killer,” marked the PRC’s inaugural conventionally armed ballistic missile capable of targeting Guam. Presently, Beijing possesses more than 400 ballistic missiles with the capability to reach Guam, in addition to showcasing supplementary bomber-launched cruise missiles.

Beyond possessing the capability to strike Guam, it appears to be an operational imperative for Beijing in a Taiwan scenario. In a war game conducted in 2023 by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the PRC targeted Andersen AFB in Guam across all 24 iterations. Consequently, nearly a quarter million US citizens find themselves under the looming threat of potential missile strikes from either North Korea or China.

**Not Enough Nor Fast Enough**

Currently, Battery E-3 of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), boasting 48 ready missiles, operates under the tactical command of the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor–Hickam in Hawai’i, overseeing the integrated air and missile defense–homeland defense (IAMD–HD) of Guam. As needed, an AEGIS-capable cruiser or destroyer supplements these defenses. Notably, the THAAD and AEGIS systems operate independently without integration. Andersen AFB does not have any fighters permanently or rota-

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tionally assigned to it by the Air Force, although it frequently hosts rotational tanker task forces.\textsuperscript{15}

The foremost priority outlined in the 2022 \textit{National Defense Strategy} is to protect the homeland, with the secondary objective being to deter strategic attacks against the United States and our allies and partners. The 2022 \textit{Missile Defense Review} further underscores this commitment, stating, “The Department will continue to deter [North Korean] attacks through forward posture; integrated air and missile defense; close coordination and interoperability with our [Republic of Korea] ROK ally; nuclear deterrence; resilience initiatives; and the potential for direct cost imposition approaches that come from globally deployable Joint Forces.” Consequently, the DOD allocates significant resources to bolster the IAMD–HD of Guam.

Financed substantially through the Pacific Deterrence Initiative and spearheaded by the Missile Defense Agency, the Enhanced Integrated Air and Missile Defense (EIAMD) system on Guam constitutes a USD 1.7-billion endeavor aimed at furnishing 360-degree layered defenses against all ballistic missile, cruise missile, and hypersonic glide threats. Recognized as USINDOPACOM’s foremost priority for homeland defense, EIAMD will amalgamate THAAD, Patriot, and AEGIS systems ashore while furnishing redundant command-and-control nodes. Engineering and testing are slated to commence by the conclusion of 2024, with initial operational capability anticipated until late 2027.\textsuperscript{16}

Despite its necessity, EIAMD alone falls short in fortifying Guam’s defense in the near term and makes minimal contributions to enhancing the homeland defense of the CNMI and the COFA states. Apart from the moral obligation to defend this sovereign territory, there exists an operational imperative. In its pursuit of Agile Combat Employment and distributed resilient basing, the US Air Force is actively pursuing the reactivation of Tinian North Airfield.\textsuperscript{17} Similarly, the construction of the Tactical Multi-Mission Over-the-Horizon Radar (TACMOR) system in Palau aims to address surveillance gaps.\textsuperscript{18} Consequently, as the United States bolsters its posture in its Pacific homeland and FAS partners, a commensurate reinforcement of IAMD forces in the theater becomes imperative.

This objective cannot be achieved solely through assigned forces, already stretched thin by the operational demands of the world’s largest geographic component. What

\textsuperscript{15} Tilghman, \textit{Guam}, 15.
is imperative is an augmentation of rotational presence, manpower, allied and partner support, and unequivocal messaging to our adversaries that an assault on our Pacific homeland equates to an assault on US sovereign territory. Fortunately, a proven strategy exists to advance all these objectives: establishing a named homeland defense operation.

**Operation Noble Eagle**

Operation Noble Eagle (ONE) stands as the Secretary of Defense–approved execution order (EXORD) initiated in direct response to the events of 9/11. Activating up to 35,000 Guardsmen and Reservists, ONE’s mission was to safeguard the United States against airborne threats, maintain air sovereignty, and protect critical US facilities from potential hostile actions, resulting in over 61,000 sorties flown to date. As of December 2023, ONE remains active, authorizing the commander of USINDOPACOM to oversee air defense operations within the command’s area of responsibility.

The FY22 Presidential Budget allocated USD 60.8 million for ONE, covering the mobilization costs of National Guard and Reserve Component personnel, as well as the operation and maintenance expenses of the National Capitol Region–integrated air defense system (NCR–IADS) and deployable integrated air defense system (D–IADS) missions. These missions aim to safeguard critical national assets and respond to national special security events. However, no funds were designated for Pacific missile defense.

Concurrently with ONE, the United States invoked Article 5 of the NATO charter, leading to the establishment of Operation Eagle Assist (OEA). Operating from 9 October 2001 to 16 May 2002, OEA saw NATO airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft augmenting the United States’ air domain awareness through nearly 4,300 flying hours over 360 operational sorties. This initiative aligns with the guidance provided in Joint Publication 3–27, *Homeland Defense*, that “to conduct HD operations across the competition continuum, combatant commanders (CCDR) with an HD mission should consider relevant multinational and nonmilitary organizations.” When gearing up to defend the outer reaches of the homeland, it is prudent to seek assistance from allies and partners.

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22 JP 3–27, x.
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While primarily oriented toward the enduring counterterrorism mission, the ONE EXORD remains active and could potentially empower USINDOPACOM to strategize, allocate resources, and conduct its homeland missile defense responsibilities. However, to underscore its emphasis on missile defense rather than solely air defense and to clearly convey that Guam and the CNMI are sovereign US territories deserving of protection, the Secretary of Defense should instigate Operation Noble Eagle–Pacific (ONE–P) as a successor to the original operation.

What Is in a Name?

Currently, USINDOPACOM relies on assigned active-duty forces to fulfill its homeland defense mission. Despite being designated as the “priority theater,” the command faces challenges in securing additional resources through the Global Force Management Allocation Plan (GFMAP), as other combatant commands—such as US Central Command, US European Command (USEUCOM), US Africa Command, and US Southern Command—have their own designated contingency operations. Designating USINDOPACOM as the supported commander for Pacific homeland defense within a ONE–P EXORD would elevate the command’s consideration for receiving additional allocated forces.

An even more compelling opportunity would be the mobilization of additional Reserve component units and manpower. In the US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) area of responsibility, the Reserve component plays a pivotal role in homeland defense by providing alert forces ready to execute IAMD operations. Unfortunately, this option is not feasible for USINDOPACOM, as the Guam Army National Guard lacks air defense units, and the Guam Air National Guard comprises solely an air base support group without air domain awareness or fighter capabilities. Additionally, the CNMI does not possess a National Guard at all. While there is potential to realign state National Guard missions, which should be pursued, an immediate need exists for increased homeland defense capability. Therefore, to generate additional forces, USINDOPACOM should consider specifically mobilizing Reserve component elements.

Under the Preplanned Mobilization Support authority, service secretaries hold the ability to direct up to 60,000 Guard and Reserve members of the Selected Reserve to active duty for a maximum of 365 consecutive days, either as units or as individual mobilization augmentees (IMA), without the members’ consent, if necessary to bolster the active forces for a preplanned mission in support of a combatant command. The only requirement is that the associated costs must be

clearly identified in the defense budget materials for the fiscal year.\textsuperscript{24} Interestingly, the FY24 PDI submission seems to lack any funding requests for additional Reserve component man-years to facilitate National Guard or Reserve support for ONE or other missions. This contrasts sharply with the European Defense Initiative (EDI), which explicitly seeks and allocates funds for Guard and Reserve support for exercises, capacity-building efforts, and rotational forces.\textsuperscript{25}

By establishing a named homeland defense operation, such as ONE–P, USINDOPACOM could potentially access up to 200,000 Selected Reserves for a duration of up to 365 days under the authority of the Presidential Reserve Call-up. This authority enables the fulfillment of operational mission requirements, excluding disaster relief or suppression of insurrection.\textsuperscript{26} Notably, on 13 July 2023, the president used this authority to deploy up to 3,000 additional personnel to support Operation Atlantic Resolve (OAR), the USEUCOM initiative aimed at reassuring and bolstering the NATO alliance amid Russia’s military actions in Ukraine. Subsequently, in August 2023, the US Secretary of Defense designated OAR as an overseas contingency operation following the activation of Reserve forces.\textsuperscript{27}

If the White House is willing to activate forces under the Presidential Reserve Call-up authority to assist in defending Europe from Russian aggression, it stands to reason that it may also be inclined to do so to safeguard American sovereign territory and the FAS from the threat posed by North Korean nuclear missiles. The pertinent question then arises: what missions, functions, and tasks would the additional forces undertake in support of ONE–P?

**To Do What?**

The primary objective would entail activating a joint task force (JTF) headquarters to oversee and coordinate the defense of Guam, the CNMI, and the FAS. The commander, Joint Region Marianas, assumes the role of commander, Task Force West–Guam, under the purview of the theater Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC)/United States Army Pacific (USARPAC). However, this task force primarily focuses on critical infrastructure protection and disaster re-


\textsuperscript{26} JP 4-05, IV-7.

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response, necessitating a distinct staffing and equipment configuration to effectively execute IAMD operations within the Pacific homeland joint operating area (JOA).

In accordance with JP 3-27, the “Commander, US Indo-Pacific Command establishes JTF-HD [Joint Task Force–Homeland Defense] as the HQ responsible for land HD operations on all bases and in all US territories within its AOR. Commander, JTF-HD, receives ready forces in support of security operations, from military engagement to warfighting. These forces promote regional stability and provide crisis response.”

Indeed, JTF–HD operated from 2006 to 2013 until its disestablishment, a move driven by headquarters streamlining directives issued by the Secretary of Defense. This initiative also led to the dissolution of JTF–519, the Pacific Fleet–led theater standing joint force headquarters, capable of planning and orchestrating a spectrum of contingencies, from noncombatant evacuations to major theater conflicts. Additionally, it resulted in a 20 percent reduction in the staffs of USINDOPACOM and its service component commands. This reduction in manpower funding, subsequently increased to 25 percent by Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work in 2015, has left all major USINDOPACOM headquarters severely understaffed to effectively plan and execute homeland defense operations, let alone prepare to deter and, if necessary, engage in conflict with the PRC.

To mitigate this shortfall, USINDOPACOM can access US Transportation Command’s Joint Enabling Capabilities Command’s joint planning support element to periodically augment its planning capacity. Furthermore, USINDOPACOM has sought funds for additional permanent civilian billets within its headquarters through the PDI. However, relying solely on part-time planning support and civilian staff in Hawai’i has its limitations in enhancing command and control of forward-deployed forces. Hence, the activation of Reserve component units and IMAs will be indispensable in establishing JTF–HD and augmenting the staffs of USINDOPACOM and its service components.

Units such as the California National Guard’s 40th Division Headquarters and South Carolina’s 263rd Army Air and Missile Defense Command appear well-suited to provide a rotational presence for the core command element of JTF–HD. Ad-

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28 JP 4-05, III-7.
ditionally, IMAs from all services could complement the joint duty assignment list of the JTF, further enhancing its operational capabilities.

The secondary mission for activated Reserve component forces would be to expedite military construction efforts in Guam and the CNMI, with a specific focus on enhancing basic infrastructure and passive defenses. Both the commander, USINDOPACOM, and the director of the Missile Defense Agency have highlighted the availability of skilled construction workers as a key limiting factor in achieving the necessary upgrades to Guam’s civilian infrastructure within the ambitious timeline set forth by the EIAMD and DPRI programs.  

Substantial progress in expanding power generation and distribution, water treatment and wastewater removal facilities, as well as housing infrastructure, could be hastened through the rotational deployment of Reserve component Army engineer battalions, Air Force rapid engineer deployable heavy operational repair squadrons, Navy Seabees, and the Marine Corps’ 6th Engineer Support Battalion. These forces could also undertake critical tasks such as systems hardening and protective construction, including the construction of hardened aircraft shelters, and resilience capabilities such as rapid airfield and port repair, as outlined in the Homeland Defense Operational Framework.  

Additionally, rotational Reserve component engineering forces could contribute to the construction of homeland defense infrastructure at Tinian North Airfield and other posture initiatives across the joint operating area.  

While the mobilization of additional Reserve component forces is crucial for the planning and execution of ONE–P, it is equally imperative to establish an international coalition to bolster homeland defense efforts.

**Building the Away Team**

The 2022 National Defense Strategy specifies two mutually supporting priorities that advocate for a multinational force (MNF) approach to IAMD of the Pacific homeland: “Defending the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by the PRC; Deterring strategic attacks against the United States, Allies, and partners.” Furthermore, the 2022 Missile Defense Review underscores the need for an MNF construct, stating, “The pacing challenge posed by the PRC, as well as the growing North Korean missile threat, have magnified the importance of collaborative regional air and missile defense efforts in the Indo–Pacific region.

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32 Tilghman, Guam, 26-28.
33 JP 4-05, I-13.
To counter these threats, the U.S. conducts missile defense cooperation with allies and partners throughout the region, which is strongest with Japan, Australia, and the Republic of Korea (ROK).”

Joint Pub 3-27, *Homeland Defense*, and Joint Pub 3-01, *Countering Air and Missile Threats*, similarly advocate for integration with allies and partners in forward regions as part of a globally integrated layered defense. The primary objective of a coalition designated by a ONE–P EXORD would be to enhance information and intelligence sharing and expand combined IAMD exercises.

Information sharing involving classified information with multinational partners adheres to the *National Disclosure Policy* (NDP). During routine competition operations, the release of classified military information (CMI) varies depending on the nation and the category of information involved. Each document and piece of information undergoes an extensive, complex, and time-consuming foreign disclosure and release process, which must become more responsive to meet the demands of IAMD–HD. Establishing an official coalition significantly streamlines the information-sharing process by enabling the joint force commander to tailor policy and procedures for a specific operation based on theater guidance and national policy outlined in the NDP. A notable example of successful information sharing is the Five Eyes Agreement, which allows intelligence and plans to be shared among its members—the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand—from inception.

In urgent circumstances, combatant commanders or their designated representatives may disclose CMI to actively participating allied or coalition forces when such information is urgently required to support ongoing or imminent military, combat, or other contingency operations. Enhanced information sharing will improve shared early warning of strategic and theater threats and facilitate coordinated response planning.

To enhance interoperability and foster unified action, a designated coalition would enable JTF–HD to host liaison teams from participating nations. These teams would play a crucial role in assisting JTF–HD by providing insights into partner nation missions and tactics, facilitating the integration and synchronization of operations, aiding in the exchange of vital information, fostering mutual trust, addressing national

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caveats, and fostering a heightened level of teamwork.\textsuperscript{38} In line with the direction outlined in the \textit{Missile Defense Review}, the initial coalition members should include Japan, Australia, and the Republic of Korea (ROK). Additionally, consideration should be given to including Canada due to its partnership with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), France due to the threat posed by DPRK missiles to its Pacific territories (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, and French Polynesia), and the United Kingdom due to its involvement in the AUKUS (Australia–United Kingdom–United States) and Five Eyes partnerships.

The participation of allied and partner operational forces in a real-world IAMD-HD scenario will hinge upon sovereign political considerations at the time. Article 6 of the NATO charter confines collective defense provisions to Europe, North America, Turkey, and Atlantic Ocean islands north of the Tropic of Cancer.\textsuperscript{39} Consequently, the Pacific Ocean territories, states, and departments of member nations are excluded from automatic NATO protection, including Hawai‘i. To ensure that JTF–HD provides decision-makers with a credible deterrence and response option, it must validate its capabilities and interoperability with designated coalition partners through exercises before any crisis arises. While focused security cooperation investments promote technical system compatibility, true interoperability is cultivated through combined field exercises. Fortunately, an existing exercise could readily serve as JTF–HD’s certifying event.

Exercise Pacific Dragon is a biennial event aimed at enhancing tactical and technical coordination and interoperability in regional air and missile defense capabilities.\textsuperscript{40} In 2022, participants included the United States, Australia, Canada, Japan, and the ROK. Currently organized as a USINDOPACOM Navy service component exercise, Pacific Dragon has the potential to evolve by incorporating THAAD on Guam, deployable Patriot systems, space and cyber components, and constructive elements. This transformation would enable it to transition into a combined/joint IAMD exercise under the command and control of JTF–HD. While the exercise would primarily involve the core coalition members, additional nations like the United Kingdom and France could be invited to participate. This inclusion could serve to encourage their future consideration for joining ONE–P.

\textbf{Two for One}

While the DPRK presents an immediate “most likely” ballistic missile threat to the Pacific homeland, the PRC poses the long-term “most dangerous” full-spectrum

\textsuperscript{38} JP 3-16: Multinational Operations (Washington: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 12 February 2021), II-9, https://www.jcs.mil/.


\textsuperscript{40} “Pacific Dragon 2022 Concludes,” US 3rd Fleet, 16 August 2022, https://www.pacom.mil/.
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air and missile threat. As previously mentioned, the PRC is anticipated to target military installations on Guam in any Western Pacific conflict scenario.\(^{41}\) Serendipitously, Kim Jong-un’s escalating aggression provides an opportunity to establish ONE–P in a manner that can simultaneously defend against and deter attacks from both the DPRK and PRC. Regardless of the aggressor or the specific scenario, JTF–HD and its assigned forces will undertake the crucial mission of IAMD–HD of existing and planned posture sites.

Considering potential scenarios involving China, the Reserve component could provide significant additional capacity in fifth-generation fighters, tankers, and air defense units to counter crewed aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, and cruise missile threats. Activating JTF–HD under ONE–P would enable USINDOPACOM to transition some of its forces to their wartime roles and reduce risk during the early phases of operational plans related to Taiwan or the South China Sea. While the PRC would likely object to the establishment of ONE–P as an escalatory action, it would bear sole responsibility for failing to deter the DPRK’s aggressive behavior.

**Changing the Narrative**

As critical as the operational considerations are, what’s even more crucial is the strategic impact of ONE–P, predominantly manned by National Guard units and personnel, in our competition with the PRC. Despite Beijing’s assertions, the United States has been inherently a Pacific nation for 50 years longer than the existence of the PRC. It is imperative to underscore in our communications with CCP leadership and through our actions that the Pacific homeland is unequivocally regarded as sovereign US territory, and any assault on it will be met with resolute response. Guam and the CNMI are territories, analogous to how Hawai’i and Alaska were when Japan attacked them in December 1941 and June 1942, respectively.

Considering the political dynamics of a given scenario, the president may or may not opt to intervene in defense of Taiwan. However, there is not a commander-in-chief, regardless of party affiliation, who could overlook an assault on sovereign American soil or the loss of American lives. If the CCP elects to seize Taiwan by force, it would be prudent for them to refrain from targeting the Pacific homeland, lest they “awaken a sleeping giant.”

Establishing ONE–P as a named operation would reshape the strategic narrative with the CCP and resonate with the American people. The United States no longer declares war; it designates named contingency operations. Introducing ONE–P would reinforce to the populace that the United States is inherently a Pacific

\(^{41}\) Cancian, Cancian, and Heginbotham, *First Battle*, 87.
nation and remind them of the imminent threat posed by the DPRK and PRC. Rotational National Guard deployments will prompt heightened congressional interest and action on Indo-Pacific security affairs. While the Pacific homeland might be distant from the thoughts of many in Congress, National Guard rotations have the potential to impact every state and congressional district. Constituents facing potential threats will significantly influence legislators in Washington, DC.

The Time is Now

Presently, the USINDOPACOM faces the dual challenge of deterring potential conflict with the PRC and countering the clear and present threat posed by the DPRK with peacetime funding, forces, and command-and-control structures. Against the backdrop of heightened collaboration among adversaries of the rules-based international order—including the DPRK, the PRC, Russia, and Iran—the United States must proactively prepare for IAMD–HD by establishing ONE–P.

This operation would enable USINDOPACOM to activate JTF–HD, bolster its operational forces and staff with Reserve component units and personnel, and form a coalition to enhance information sharing, operational coordination, and regional defense capabilities. Such measures would enable USINDOPACOM to mitigate risk in a potential conflict scenario involving the PRC while reshaping the strategic narrative surrounding the United States’ sovereignty as a Pacific nation.

Considering the inevitable increase in intercontinental ballistic missile and nuclear tests, launching a named homeland defense operation would constitute a proportionate and strategic response. The time is ripe for the Secretary of Defense to direct the planning and execution of ONE–P.

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