

Yangtze's distribution of silt both upstream and down stream.⁹¹ The lot of scattered domestic critics of the dam project has not been a good one. In May 1992, members of the Democratic Youth Party in Kai Country were arrested and "charged with counterrevolutionary activities aimed at sabotaging the progress of the Three Gorges project."⁹² The fate of the youth members is unknown. Critics in the Chinese scientific community have also been accused of disloyalty: books have been banned, and publishers imprisoned.⁹³ Clearly, the Chinese regime has not sought an open dialogue on the project, nor welcomed unsolicited interventions or views on the project's environmental effects. Yet, it must also be said that the Three Gorges protests have largely been predictably unarticulated and isolated and easily "managed" by the regime.

6. Conclusions - Uncertainties Abound

Given the complexity of the ecological, social, economic and political forces at work, predicting what amounts to the China of the 21st century is highly speculative. Because of the multidimensional nature of the linkage and data limitations, empirical analysis of how environmental factors in China work through the conceptual framework (Figure 1) and how the myriad variables interact is not rigorous. Given these limitations, our analysis nonetheless does point to a longer-term potential for environmental stress to contribute to violent conflict. But let us reassert the fundamental point that such an outcome is not imminent nor inevitable. Moreover, and significantly, violent conflict in China, if it occurs, is likely to be the result of multiple causation. We should always keep in mind that while environmental stress may result in conflict, environmental sustainability does not ensure peace.

The analysis suggests that Chinese decision-makers need to take into account the links between environmental stress and national security to enhance policy making. The concept of national security is no longer confined to military activities and national political sovereignty. The government would be prudent to take a more systematic and committed approach to addressing environmental stress-national security issues. This includes problem identification, the requirement to anticipate emerging environmental stresses, and the analysis of how such stress may become

⁹¹Audrey R. Topping, "Ecological Roulette: Damming the Yangtze", Foreign Affairs, Volume 74, No. 5, September/October 1995, pp. 139-42.

⁹²ibid., p. 134.

⁹³ibid., p.143.