

CONFLICT PREVENTION ACROSS THE TAIWAN STRAIT AND THE MAKING OF CHINA'S ANTI-SECESSION LAW

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China has developed a unique approach of conflict prevention characterized by liangshou celue—literally, a “two hands” or a two-pronged strategy. It is a stick-and-carrot approach, involving an oscillating pattern of military coercion and peaceful offensive. After the fourth generation of Chinese leadership under Hu Jintao came to office, an Anti-Secession Law was passed by China’s National People’s Congress on March 14, 2005. Prescribing the conditions for military action against Taiwan, this law was described by some people in the West and Taiwan as a war authorization law, mainly driven by Chinese nationalism, to set a benchmark against nationalist pressure and show Chinese leaders’ willingness to risk war across the Taiwan Strait at all cost. It thus is said to signify not only greater irrationality in China’s policy toward Taiwan but also a change in the two-pronged conflict-prevention approach. Is Chinese nationalism in fact a cause of international aggression, making China’s policy toward Taiwan irrational and inflexible? Does the Anti-Secession Law signal that Beijing is on a path that reduces its scope for rational choices? This article will explore the making of the Anti-Secession Law to find answers to these questions.

Key words: China’s policy toward Taiwan, East Asian security, nationalism

Introduction

Although circumstances have not reached the boiling point, the Taiwan Strait remains one of the most dangerous places in the world because the possibility of a direct military confrontation between the United States and China over Taiwan is genuine. The consequences of the potential conflict are dire enough that conflict prevention and management has become a real challenge for each party involved.

At issue is whether or not Taiwan may gain the status of an independent state. China has not allowed Taiwan to become an independent state because this move would threaten not only China's national security but also the nationalist credentials of the communist regime. To deter Taiwan's drift toward permanent independence, Beijing has never given up its threat of using non-peaceful or military means for national unification. Since China started to reform and open up in the late 1970s, pragmatic Chinese leaders have set peace and development as the country's overriding goals. For this purpose, they have attempted to prevent military conflict across the Taiwan Strait because they would not want to sacrifice China's modernization efforts as long as Taiwan does not constitutionally declare independence.

As a result, China has developed a unique approach to conflict prevention characterized by *liangshou celue*, literally, a "two hands" or a two-pronged strategy. It is a stick-and-carrot approach, involving an oscillating pattern of military coercion and peaceful offensive. The coercive element of the strategy relies primarily upon the use of or the threat to use force. It could be military actions aiming at the conquest of Taiwan or military brinkmanship using military force in an exemplary and demonstrative manner. A peaceful offense or inducement relies on cross-strait political negotiations and economic and cultural exchanges to bind Taiwan's hands on independence. It seeks to build goodwill and momentum for eventual national reunification.

Although this two-pronged approach has not prevented Taiwan from moving gradually toward independence, it has prevented Taiwan from explicitly declaring independence and has prevented war from erupting. After the fourth generation of Chinese leadership under Hu Jintao came to office, an Anti-Secession Law was passed by China's National People's Con-

gress on March 14, 2005. Prescribing the conditions for military action against Taiwan, this law was described by some people in the West and Taiwan as a war authorization law, mainly driven by Chinese nationalism, to set a benchmark against nationalist pressure and show Chinese leaders' willingness to risk war across the Taiwan Strait at any cost. It thus was said to signify not only greater irrationality in China's policy toward Taiwan but also a change in the two-pronged conflict-prevention approach.

Is Chinese nationalism a cause of international aggression, making China's policy toward Taiwan tougher and inflexible? Does the Anti-Secession Law signal that Beijing is on a path that reduces its scope for rational choices? This article will explore the making of the Anti-Secession Law to find answers to these questions.

Negative Responses to the Anti-Secession Law

In passing the Anti-Secession Law, Beijing insisted that it aimed at keeping the peace across the Taiwan Strait. The official *People's Daily* reported from Taipei after passage of the Anti-Secession Law: "Most of the people believe the Anti-Secession Law is a practical, firm, gentle, rational law, creating an opportunity to push forward relations across the Strait."¹ In reality, however, the law triggered massive protests in Taiwan and sharp criticism from the U.S. government, mainly because officials there see article 8 of the law—which authorizes the use of "non-peaceful measures" against Taiwan—as provocative. China paid a price abroad, "spoiling a strategy for relations with Taiwan, undercutting a drive to end Europe's arms embargo and reinforcing unease over the growth in Chinese military power."²

These negative responses were largely due to the fact that the passage of the law was ill-timed. It came after Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian began to soften his stance. In a ten-point declaration on cross-strait relations made jointly with James Soong, chair-

1. "Taiwan Compatriots: Anti-Secession Law Very Practical," *People's Daily Online*, March 18, 2005.

2. Edward Cody, "China's Law on Taiwan Backfires," *Washington Post*, March 23, 2005.

man of the opposition People First Party, Chen pledged not to declare independence or change the island's official name during his second term. The president even accepted a deal brokered by the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) to launch the first nonstop charter flight across the Strait since 1949 by both Taiwan and PRC carriers during the Chinese New Year.

The Anti-Secession Law, in this case, as U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said in an interview, "increased tension from the Taiwan Straits [rather than] diminished it."³ The law brought a temporary halt to the relaxation of tensions across the Strait that had prevailed over the winter. While the pro-independence Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) sent an "Anti-Annexation Law" to Taiwan's Legislative Yuan, President Chen joined about a half-million people in Taipei in marching on March 26 to denounce the law in one of the largest political demonstrations ever on Taiwan. The furor over the Anti-Secession Law and the march allowed Chen to woo back many angry independence advocates. But in Beijing these actions were criticized for creating "new tension across the Strait."

The Anti-Secession Law also raised alarm bells in the United States and Europe. Before announcing the law, China was gaining ground, both in the international community and in Taiwan. Chen Shui-bian was criticized as a troublemaker by more and more people in the George W. Bush administration as Chen pushed the envelope with uncalled-for initiatives against Beijing. The Anti-Secession Law switched the focus from Taipei to Beijing for changing the status quo "by introducing the new law authorizing the use of force against Taiwan just when relations looked ripe for repair."⁴ In the meantime, the law made it more difficult for the European Union to lift the arms embargo that many suggested could happen in the summer of 2005, in spite of strong U.S. lobbying to maintain the embargo. By underlining China's willingness to go to war over Taiwan, the law also set back China's multi-faceted diplomatic campaign to persuade the world, especially the East Asian region, that its rise as a world

3. "Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at the Post," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2005.

4. Catherine Armitage, "China Warns 'Malevolent' Taiwan," *The Australian*, March 28, 2005.

power would be peaceful and would not constitute a threat to other nations.

In light of these negative responses, why was the Anti-Secession Law passed at this time? Was it because the rise of Chinese nationalism made the Chinese leadership less rational in crafting its Taiwan policy? To find answers to these questions, we start with a brief discussion of the recent rise of Chinese nationalism and its foreign-policy implications.⁵

Chinese Nationalism and Its International Orientations

Chinese nationalism is indeed on the rise. In recent years the post-Mao leadership has rediscovered the value of nationalism for holding the country together after the decline of communist ideology. China's nationalist legitimacy was bolstered, for instance, in the fight over China's entry into the World Trade Organization, the achievement of favorable trade status in the United States, the decision to hold the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008, and the stop put to the idea of Taiwan independence. Nationalism has resonated among Chinese intellectuals and popular society. Concerned that the Western countries would come to confront a rising China, some Chinese intellectuals have argued that nationalism is indispensable and a rational choice to advance China's national interests.

This development has raised the question whether or not an aggressive nationalism has emerged or would emerge from China's "century of humiliation," making Chinese foreign policy irrational and inflexible.

Three Forms of Nationalism

Indeed, nationalism has played very different roles in Chinese history. It inspired generations of Chinese intellectuals fighting to resist imperialism and seeking ways to modernize. It also produced fear, hatred, and hostility toward foreigners. These different

5. This part of the discussion is based on my recent book: Suisheng Zhao, *A Nation-State by Construction: Dynamics of Modern Chinese Nationalism* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2004).

international orientations have been linked with different nationalist perspectives: nativism, anti-traditionalism, and pragmatism. Each is rooted in a different assessment of the sources of national weakness and advocates a distinctive approach to revitalize China.

Nativism sees foreign imperialist invasion and the subversion of indigenous Chinese virtues as the root of China's weakness and calls for a return to Chinese tradition and self-reliance. Anti-traditionalism sees China's tradition as the source of its weakness, calling for the adoption of foreign culture and models. Pragmatic nationalism takes a middle road and sees the lack of modernization as the source of China's weakness and is willing to adopt whatever approach can make China strong. As Deng Xiaoping said, "it doesn't matter if it is a black or white cat as long as it can catch rats."

The three perspectives of Chinese nationalism are often related to different international orientations. Nativism typically finds expression in confrontational anti-foreignism. The most extreme example is the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. Anti-traditionalism seeks to accommodate to a "progressive" or "modern" world. One example is China's early effort to adopt the Soviet model and accommodate to the Soviet-led communist world. Another example is liberal anti-traditionalists' call in the 1980s to adopt Western models and accommodate to the Western world. Pragmatic nationalism adapts to the changing world but has nothing, or very little, to do with any ideology, either Marxism or liberalism. It is a national interest-driven doctrine or program.

All three perspectives of Chinese nationalism have influenced the thinking of Chinese communist leaders. In the early decades of the People's Republic, Chinese foreign policy swung between the two extremes of confrontation and accommodation, driven by either nativism or anti-traditionalism. After Deng launched the economic reforms at the end of the 1970s, pragmatism became the dominant thinking among Chinese leaders.

Pragmatic nationalism sets economic prosperity as the overarching objective of China and the pathway for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to stay in power. It is also the foundation for China's rising nationalistic aspirations. To pursue economic prosperity, peace and development are emphasized as China's major international goals. Although pragmatic nationalism is assertive in defending China's national security and is

uncompromising with foreign demands involving China's perceived vital interests, such as the preservation of national sovereignty and reunification with Taiwan, pragmatic leaders have tried to avoid confrontational relations with the United States and other Western powers because it would not be in the interest of China's modernization.

From a pragmatic perspective, nationalism is a double-edged sword. While the communist government may use nationalism to compensate for declining communist ideology, it may also cause serious backlash and place the government in a hot spot facing challenges from both domestic and international sources.

Domestically, nationalism is both a means for legitimating CCP rule and a means for the Chinese people to judge the performance of the state. If Chinese leaders cannot deliver on their nationalist promise, they are vulnerable to nationalistic criticism. As a matter of fact, rising nationalism has run into a criticism of China's foreign policy, including the seemingly too "soft" stance toward Taiwan's independence movement. Internationally, the rise of Chinese nationalism has coincided with a negative view of nationalism in the modern world. In this context, the new tide of Chinese nationalism has caused anxiety in Asia and the rest of the world in recent years.

Balancing the positive and the negative sides, pragmatic PRC leaders have been very ambivalent in promoting nationalism. They are also cautious about handling it for fear of letting the nationalist sentiment of the Chinese people get out of hand. On the Taiwan issue, although nationalism has set the tone of PRC rhetoric, its policy has not been dictated by emotional nationalist rhetoric on the streets. Instead, PRC policy has been constructed based on prudence.

The Making of the Anti-Secession Law

Talking Tough, Acting Prudently

Beijing's sovereignty claim over Taiwan and actions to stop Taiwan from becoming independent played a special role in maintaining the nationalist legitimacy of the communist regime because territorial integrity and national unity have a symbolic

value in Chinese nationalism. However, nationalism has not prevented Beijing's pragmatic leadership from adopting a peaceful strategy, rather than costly military action, as the most desirable approach. Although the Anti-Secession Law was not passed at the best time, the law does little more than codify long-standing policy and does not expand the conditions under which force might be used.

Looking back at Beijing's threat to use force in the last decade, we see a typical pattern of talking tough but acting prudently. During the crisis following President Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States in 1995, China threatened to use military force by launching missiles close to Taiwan's coasts. However, the threat really amounted to military brinkmanship—using the threat of war to ensure peace across the Strait. The logic was this: China would have to wage a war against Taiwan if it declared independence, so military threats would reduce the likelihood of a declaration of independence. Thus, military threats would make a war less likely.⁶

Another case was the Chinese threat during Taiwan's 2000 presidential election. One month before the election, China published a white paper that was notable for putting forward "*sange ruguo*" (Three Ifs) to clarify the premise for the mainland's use of force against Taiwan. Before this white paper, China had threatened military action only if Taiwan declared independence and/or in the event of foreign invasion of the island. The white paper added the third "if"—if Taiwan indefinitely refused peaceful reunification through negotiations. Three days prior to the election, in a news conference at the National People's Congress on March 15, Premier Zhu Rongji threatened the Taiwan voters that a victory by Taiwan independence forces would spark a cross-strait war. At the end, however, although Beijing was unhappy that the candidate most unacceptable to it, Chen Shui-bian, was elected president, on weighing its options, China's pragmatism prevailed: Beijing decided to refrain from using force. Instead, it formulated a wait-and-see policy.

The Anti-Secession Law is just another case of making a war

6. You Ji, "Changing Leadership Consensus," in Suisheng Zhao, ed., *Across the Taiwan Strait: Mainland China, Taiwan, and the 1995-1996 Crisis* (London: Routledge, 1999).

threat to win peace. It grew out of Beijing's frustration with President Chen's pushing of the envelope, particularly his attempt to change the Republic of China (ROC) constitution. Beijing has been mostly in a defensive and reactive position in the past decade. When the fourth generation of leadership under Hu Jintao came to office and began to consolidate its power, the new leaders looked for ways to change this passive position. This was not only because rising Chinese nationalism led to Beijing's leaders being blamed for having been too soft toward Taiwan's independent movement; it was also because of the leaders' belief that Taiwan's formal declaration of independence via a constitutional change was a real possibility.

The idea of an anti-secession law was initially intended as a response to Taiwan's enactment of a Referendum Law in December 2003. It gained momentum after Chen Shui-bian won a marginal reelection victory in March 2004 and announced a highly provocative *zhengmin* (name correction) campaign, such as changing the name of state-owned enterprises to emphasize "Taiwan" instead of "Republic of China" and inserting the name "Taiwan" in official correspondence from the foreign ministry. Beijing was very worried that the December legislative yuan election would give Chen the majority necessary to move toward amending the constitution in 2006.

But the pro-independence ruling pan-green coalition, led by President Chen, failed to win that election. The defeat was interpreted as a signal by the majority in Taiwan to maintain the status quo rather than risk a war with the mainland by pressing for formal independence. Chen's position, therefore, began to soften. The law, however, widely publicized in state media, had worked its way through the party bureaucracy, and was ready for the approval of the National People's Congress. The domestic political cost would be too high to stop the momentum for passage.

Seeking Peaceful Reunification

Passing the Anti-Secession Law, however, Beijing certainly did not want to see it fuel tensions across the Strait. In spite of its setback, Beijing has tried to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative effects in its follow-on treatment of the law. Just as

the concerns over the statement of non-peaceful means were mounting, the leadership started plotting a series of initiatives to show its more benign side. A *People's Daily* editorial stressed that "This law fully embodies our consistent stand on striving for peaceful reunification with the utmost sincerity and the greatest effort" and that "it is not a law of war, but is a law for the peaceful reunification of the country." At a press conference, Wang Zaixi, deputy minister of the State Council Taiwan Affairs office, offered further reassurances of peaceful intent by emphasizing that the passage of the law did not mean a toughening of the PRC's attitude toward Taiwan. The law, he said, is meant to promote peaceful reunification rather than undermine bilateral relations. In a speech the day before the law was passed, Hu Jintao attempted to show his good will by expressing China's willingness to relax restrictions on agricultural imports from southern Taiwan. Weeks after the law was passed, Beijing undertook an historic reconciliation with Taiwan's main opposition parties, including its long-time foe, the Kuomintang. President Hu shook hands with KMT leaders in the Great Hall of the People in front of the international media, greatly easing global concerns sparked by passage of the law.

It is worth noting that although the Anti-Secession Law codifies China's determination to achieve national unification under the "one China" principle and the military option is clearly included among the "non-peaceful measures" to deter Taiwan independence "under any name or by any means," the law does not add any new provisions or content to past PRC policy positions. Nor does the law establish a deadline for unification, after which military action would occur, as some Chinese officials in recent years had advocated. Against this background, the law is less threatening than it at first appears. Under the fictional assumption that Taiwan is already legally part of "one China," there is no ultimatum for reunification, only an interdiction against a formal declaration of independence.

While many people have focused on the "non-peaceful means" statement, one needs to pay equal attention to the law's article that emphasizes peaceful means as the most preferable approach to reach the long-standing objective of national unification. That is, national unification should be achieved through phased consultations, conducted on an equal footing as long as

there is a "glimmer of hope" of success in reunification. Here, two last minute changes in the text before the law was finally passed are noteworthy. The wording of the third "or" that would compel China to employ "non-peaceful means" in Article 8 was originally "that *conditions* for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted." In the final text, it becomes "that *possibilities* for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted."⁷ According to a Chinese scholar, this change implies that China would "exhaust all possibilities to achieve peaceful unification." Article 2 in the final text added a sentence that Taiwan, being part of the PRC, and Taiwan and the mainland together making up "one China," reconfirmed the position that talks between Beijing and Taiwan would be on an equal basis. That is why on reading the text carefully, an *Asia Times Online* article indicated that "China's Anti-Secession Law is neither as inflammatory as many had feared nor as bombastic as Beijing's previous statements on cross-strait issues."⁸

In this case, it is reasonable to argue that the Anti-Secession Law not only does not signify greater irrationality in China's policy toward Taiwan but also may not shift the cross-strait balance in any fundamental way. As a *South China Morning Post* reporter noted, the law "changes nothing in the cross-strait balance, and serves no practical legal purpose, domestically or internationally."⁹ Although the existing Taiwan policy is now reinforced by Chinese law, it does not create any authority that did not exist before, and its effect on decision making is not clear. As Ralph Cossa indicated, "Passing a law—in a country where the rule of law is applied selectively, often at the leadership's whim—hardly makes an attack any more (or less) likely."¹⁰

7. Ji Xin, "Taiwan dangju juewu chaonong minyi" [Taiwan Authorities, Don't Distort Public Opinion], *Renmin Ribao*, March 24, 2005, p. 3.

8. Bruce Klingner, "The Dragon Squeezes Taiwan," *Asia Times Online*, March 15, 2005.

9. Anthony Lawrance, "Much Ado About Nothing," *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), March 15, 2005.

10. Ralph A. Cossa, "Anti-Secession Law: Closing (or Opening) the Door?" PacNet 14A, March 28, 2005, online at www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pac0514a.pdf.

Taiwan's Reaction

Although the incumbent leaders of Taiwan's ruling party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), responded very negatively to the passage of the Anti-Secession Law, in general the reactions from Taiwan were restrained. Whether or not they realized the rationale behind the making of the law, Taiwan's leaders should understand that over-reactions from Taiwan may encourage further escalation, prompting another Chinese reaction. In the end a vicious cycle of action and reaction will result. The people of Taiwan have every right to express their opposition to the military threat prescribed by this law. However, as Richard Bush indicated, it is prudent for Taiwan's leaders "to avoid steps that inflame the situation further or foreclose the possibility of more positive cross-Strait steps when and if the political atmosphere changes for the better."¹¹ That is why U.S. Secretary of State Rice said to the Chinese leadership, "you do an anti-secession law, then they react, then you react to that and they react to that and pretty soon we're all up here."¹² While the Anti-Secession Law set back relations with the PRC, Taiwan's leaders were aware that Beijing could not be pushed into a corner where the only option it had left was a military one. As a *South China Morning News* reporter indicated, "You do not need legislation to govern this divide while reason prevails, and when reason is gone, no legislation is going to make a difference, anyway."¹³

The DPP leaders were walking a thin line between allowing Taiwan people to vent their grievances while not allowing their feelings to be translated into imprudent actions by the government. The Taiwan government made clear that the mainland's law had damaged relations and disrupted a tenuous detente begun early in the year. But the chairman of Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council suggested, upon China's passage of the law, that the push to chart cargo flights could resume if public anger in Taiwan over the Chinese law subsided. He said President Chen

11. Richard Bush, "Taiwan Should Exercise Restraint in Reacting to the Challenge of China's Anti-Secession Law," PacNet 14, March 28, 2005, online at www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pac0514a.pdf.

12. "Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at The Post."

13. Lawrance, "Much Ado About Nothing."

Shui-bian intended to stick to an earlier pledge to make "peace and development" the core of his policy toward China.¹⁴

Instead of initiating a referendum in response to the law, Chen cautiously chose to demonstrate in the streets of Taipei. Rather than calling for Taiwanese independence, the massive protest rally emphasized Taiwan's desire for continued peace and democracy. Although Chen participated in the rally, he did not speak to the masses, in contrast with previous occasions when the independence-minded president had used party gatherings to make provocative remarks. Chen also resisted the TSU legislators' push for counter-legislation, which would likely have triggered an escalation of hostility.

Chen's restraint was in line with domestic political dynamics in Taiwan that called for steering relations back toward the earlier relaxation in the winter. While the opposition pan-blue coalition blamed Chen's pro-independent actions for provoking the law, the Kuomintang, as Taiwan's biggest opposition party, sent a high-level delegation led by Vice-Chairman Chiang Pin-kun to China only two days after the March 26 rally. This was the first official KMT delegation to China since the party fled to Taiwan amid China's civil war in 1949. The trip would pave the way for a visit by KMT Chairman Lien Chan, who would explore new venues for improve relations. Another development was that the founder of Taiwan's Chi Mei Group, Hsu Wen-long, whose support of Chen was crucial in his 2000 presidential election victory, published an open letter on the front page of the Taiwan's *Economic Daily News* hours before the March 26 rally, warning that "Taiwan independence will only lead Taiwan to war and drag people to disaster." He also stated that Taiwan and the mainland both belonged to one China and the Anti-Secession Law made him at ease to invest in the mainland.

Conclusion

It has taken a while for the dust to settle. The setback caused by the Anti-Secession Law proved temporary. Although pre-

14. Jason Dean, "Taiwan Shows Restraint on Law Against Secession," *Wall Street Journal*, March 15, 2005.

scribing the conditions for possible use of force, the Anti-Secession Law has not changed Beijing's strategy of threatening war to achieve peace. This seemingly contradictory strategy of talking tough but acting in a calculated manner showed that pragmatic leaders were aware of the danger of falling victim to nationalism. China's Taiwan policy has not been dictated by the emotional voice of nationalism; instead, it has been based on careful calculation of China's national interests. The Anti-Secession Law is consistent with Beijing's two-pronged approach to prevent both Taiwan independence and war across the Taiwan Strait. In fact, it is worth noting that when Hu Jintao took over the chairmanship of China's Central Military Commission (CMC) in September 2004, he approved new guidelines on Taiwan policy: "strive for negotiation, prepare for war and have no fear of Taiwan's procrastination."¹⁵ These guidelines, together with the Anti-Secession Law, showed both the flexibility and the persistence of the new generation of leadership. In other words, the leadership has become softer on its peaceful offensive and harder on coercive threat.

Chongpin Lin, former deputy minister of defense in Taiwan, acknowledged this change in the Taiwan policy of the new generation of leadership when he concluded that "Hu's Taiwan policy is going to be more flexible, persistent, proactive, patient, subtle, and even more comprehensive." To support his conclusion, he summarized the following five new features of the Hu leadership in terms of its policy toward Taiwan. First, Hu has been more patient; he has no timetable for unification. Second, Hu has set the first option to deal with Taiwan as "annexing Taiwan without war" and emphasized a non-military strategy. Apart from launching psychological warfare, legal warfare, and media warfare against Taiwan, Hu also engaged Taiwan in diplomatic, economic, cultural, and even religious warfare. Third, Hu has placed emphasis on winning over the hearts and minds of the Taiwanese people, through such measures as the proposal to facilitate direct charter flights, to aid the overseas Taiwanese in need, and to import agricultural goods from Taiwan. While trying to prevent Taipei from declaring *de jure* independence, Hu has tacitly acknowledged its *de facto* independence. Fourth,

15. Personal interview in Beijing, October 2005.

while Hu will support the use of military force to "deter the United States and seize Taiwan," he prefers the option of "coercion to the brink," which entails striking without bloodshed or destruction, and without missiles falling on the enemy's territory. The goal is to give the enemy a psychological feeling that great misfortune could appear out of the blue. Fifth, Hu has handled the sovereignty issue with flexibility.¹⁶

This new policy orientation has paid off. The negative effects of the Anti-Secession Law have passed away quickly. Beijing has continued its two-pronged policy of peaceful offensive and military coercion. However, this does not mean that China's threat to use force against Taiwan is in any way justifiable. Though the rationale of the law is to deter what Beijing perceived as a challenge to its fundamental interests and to discourage what it calls secession by separatism, it has never found a way to make its national unification attractive to Taiwan because it has never understood why Taiwan fears the "one country, two systems" approach to unification. As Richard Bush indicated, by raising the specter of the use of force in the Anti-Secession Law, Beijing has

increased Taiwan's fears and undermined its own unification appeals. Its threats have rendered hollow all of its assurances. The balance it has struck between the two has had a perverse effect. It has strengthened the very political forces it wants to weaken. Indeed, it has united a hitherto divided populace.¹⁷

To win the hearts and minds of the Taiwanese people, Beijing has to work with the Taiwan authorities to continue the expansion of transportation and communication links across the Strait. The PRC and Taiwan should aim at increasing political, economic, social, and cultural exchanges with a view to expanding mutual understanding and diminishing the chances of miscommunication or misunderstanding. In addition, a formal, negotiated, and enduring framework for cross-strait relations has to be established. In addition to talking with Taiwan's opposition parties, Beijing has to find a way to resume the dialogue across the Taiwan Strait between the semi-official agencies.

16. Chongpin Lin, "Hu Making His Own Taiwan Policy," *Taipei Times*, March 26, 2005.

17. Bush, "Taiwan Should Exercise Restraint."

Eventually, it should launch formal negotiations between the two governments on an equal footing to end the hostility.

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