

Introduction: The Taiwan Question

The United States has had through the years a number of ostensibly oppositional interests in the status of the Republic of China, the unofficial but de facto government of Taiwan. The U.S. seems to support, at different moments, both the views of the People's Republic of China and those of the Republic of China. Taiwan is caught currently in a kind of political no man's land, between being a province of the PRC and being an independent state. It currently runs its own affairs, including, in a limited way, providing for its defense and performing its own diplomatic contacts with the rest of the world. These diplomatic contacts are somewhat restricted, however, as they are mostly completely unofficial. Taiwan enjoys official relations with only 23 states.¹ The Republic of China on Taiwan is not currently recognized by the United States, the U.N., or by the majority of world states. Its diplomatic relations within the world, however, continue on an unofficial basis. For a long time, both the ROC and the PRC claimed sovereignty over all of China including Taiwan (the ROC no longer actively does so, though no change has been made to its constitution officially altering that standpoint).² To understand the evolution of the current circumstances, the interests of the United States in Taiwan, and U.S. foreign policy in the region, a brief look at the history of Taiwan is necessary.

Historical Background: Taiwan's History from 1544 to 1949

Although officials of the People's Republic of China have claimed repeatedly that “Taiwan has been an inseparable part of China's territory since antiquity,”³ there is no evidence to support

-
- 1 Adams, Jonathan. “Taiwan Officials Quit in Diplomatic Furor.” *New York Times* 7 May 2008: A8. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 14 Jun. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.
 - 2 “Political status of Taiwan.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 8 Jul. 2008. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_status_of_Taiwan>.
 - 3 Wang Guangya. “Statement by Chinese Permanent Representative Wang Guangya at General Committee of 59th Session of General Assembly on 'Taiwan's participation in the United Nations'.” Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations. 15 Sept. 2004. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.china-un.org/eng/zt/twwt/t157666.htm>>.

this claim. Indeed, this view is often dismissed outright.⁴ Evidence indicates that Taiwan first appeared on a Chinese imperial map in 1683.⁵ Prior to this time, the Dutch set up a trading post in 1623 and a colony in 1624. Later, the Spanish also set up a fort on the northwest side of the island, only to be driven off by a Dutch/Aborigine force in 1642. Previously, in 1544, the island had been sighted by Portuguese explorers, who dubbed it “Ilha Formosa,” meaning “Beautiful Island.” This name is sometimes still used today in connection with Taiwan. 1592 marked the beginning of several unsuccessful attempts by the Japanese to conquer the island from the Aborigines who were then living on it. In 1609, Japanese explorers studied the island.⁶

The first Chinese came to the island in 1662. These loyalists of the Ming dynasty, who were fleeing the conquering Manchurian Qing dynasty, drove the Dutch out and settled on the island. They were conquered 21 years later by Qing naval forces and forced to submit to Qing rule. This marked the beginning of official Chinese possession of Taiwan. It was at this time that Taiwan first appeared on an imperial map. The island soon became a prefecture and later, in 1885, a Chinese province.⁷

Taiwan's time as a Chinese province was to be short-lived. As mentioned above, the Japanese had been interested in Taiwan since at least the 16th century. China was forced in 1895 to cede the island to the Japanese as a condition for losing the Sino-Japanese war. Taiwan remained Japanese territory until the end of WWII. Allied forces at the Cairo Conference in 1943 had agreed that China would receive Taiwan when the war was over. In 1945, Japan surrendered unconditionally, giving Taiwan back to the Republic of China, which was the legitimate and official government of China at the time.⁸

Taiwan's days of uncontroversial status were numbered, however. The Chinese Civil War

4 Chen Ching-chih. “Taiwan belongs to the Taiwanese.” *Taipei Times* 7 Jul. 2005: p8. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2005/07/07/2003262545>>.

5 “Taiwan.” *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan#History>>.

6 *ibid*

7 *ibid*

8 *ibid*

ended in 1949 with the victory of the communists under Mao Zedong. Around 2 million refugees, mostly businessmen and members of the ROC nationalist government and military, fled to Taiwan and set up a government in exile. On October 1st, 1949, the People's Republic of China was formed. Both governments claimed sovereignty over all of China, including Taiwan.⁹

U.S. Policy in the Taiwan Strait from 1949 to 1979

The U.S. policy at this time was one of communist containment.¹⁰ The U.S. therefore declined to recognize the People's Republic of China and continued relations only with the Republic of China on Taiwan. The U.N. also did not recognize the PRC. Taiwan was now a part of the U.S.'s anti-communist strategy. In the 1960s however, tensions between the Soviet Union and the PRC intensified, leading to a number of incidents along the Chinese-Soviet border.¹¹ Although these border disputes were eventually resolved, Sino-Soviet relations would never quite fully recover. This may have opened the door to beginning relations with the PRC, as it became clear that the Soviet Union and the PRC were not one unified entity.

In the 1970s, during the Nixon administration, Nixon and his national security advisor Henry Kissinger found it important to balance world power. The three “key relationships” under Kissinger's system were those between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China.¹² As such, it was critical to return the People's Republic of China to the world community. In fact, Nixon wrote that the United States “cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations. There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation.”¹³ This marked the beginning of a change in the U.S. stance toward the People's Republic

9 *ibid*

10 McCormick, James M. *American Foreign Policy and Process*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth. p46.

11 “Sino-Soviet Amur Conflict.” *American University Trade and Environment Database*. Ed. Dr. James R. Lee. American University. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.american.edu/TED/ice/3sinosov.htm>>.

12 McCormick, James M. *American Foreign Policy and Process*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.p 107.

13 *ibid* p105.

of China and, therefore, toward the Republic of China as well.

In 1971, the U.N. altered its recognition from the ROC to the PRC. This was the result of several developments in the decade leading up to 1971. Beginning in the 1960s, repeated annual resolutions, begun by Albania, moved to recognize the PRC as China's official government. The United States continually managed to pull together a majority to block this resolution. As time progressed, however, more and more third-world countries became members of the United Nations. These countries tended to be sympathetic toward Beijing. When Nixon came to power, U.S. opposition to U.N. PRC recognition evaporated and the PRC entered the United Nations. As a result, the ROC lost all representation in the U.N., including its seat on the security council.¹⁴

In 1972, Nixon met with Chinese Premier Chou En-lai and they composed the first of three important documents that would have a critical influence on U.S. relations with both the PRC and the ROC. In the first document, known as the *Shanghai Communique*, the U.S. stresses that “all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position.”¹⁵ This marked the beginning of a U.S. approach to the PRC that would eventually result in U.S. recognition of the PRC government in Beijing.

At the end of 1978, during the Carter administration, a second communique was released that would establish normal diplomatic relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China starting on January 1st, 1979. This also ended official diplomatic relations between the United States and the Republic of China on Taiwan.¹⁶

14 “China and the United Nations.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Jul. 2008 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_and_the_United_Nations>.

15 “Shanghai Communiqué.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique01.htm>>.

16 “Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique02.htm>>.

U.S. Policy in Taiwan from 1979 to the Present

As we have seen in the last segment, the U.S. policy toward China during the height of the Cold War years was to recognize only the Republic of China as part of a policy of communist containment. With the recognition of the People's Republic of China by the U.N. and the U.S. during the 1970s, the U.S. policy toward China turned a fundamental corner. Nixon and Carter both believed the PRC's presence in international affairs was essential to world stability. It is important to note, however, that the United States did not end all relations with Taiwan. Instead, it set up an institute to act as an informal embassy to Taiwan as a way of maintaining strategic connections to its ally.

The American Institute in Taiwan was formed as part of the *Taiwan Relations Act (PL 96-8)* and is authorized to continue "commercial, cultural and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan."¹⁷ It is the U.S.'s unofficial embassy and consulate in Taiwan, carrying visa responsibilities as well. In addition, TECRO, the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Representation Office, is Taiwan's recognized representative in Washington, as well as Taiwan's unofficial embassy.¹⁸

The *Taiwan Relations Act* laid down the framework that has guided U.S. foreign policy toward Taiwan ever since. Aside from creating the American Institute in Taiwan, the Act set out six points outlining the U.S.'s policy intentions in the area. The U.S. policy according to the Act was:

- (1) to preserve and promote extensive, close, and friendly commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan, as well as the people on the China mainland and all other peoples of the Western Pacific area;
- (2) to declare that peace and stability in the area are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern;
- (3) to make clear that the United States decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means;
- (4) **to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States;**

17 "About American Institute in Taiwan (AIT)." American Institute in Taiwan. American Institute in Taiwan. 5 Jul. 2008 <http://www.ait.org.tw/en/about_ait/>.

18 Dumbaugh, Kerry. "CRS Report for Congress." Federation of American Scientists. 20 April 2007: p17. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

(5) to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character; and
(6) to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.¹⁹ (emphasis added)

U.S. policy and interests are clearly defined within the act and have remained essentially unchanged to this day. The United States, therefore, sought to court parties on both sides of the Strait. It recognized the People's Republic of China and assured its leaders in three different communiques that it would not violate China's territorial integrity, nor would it seek a policy of “Two Chinas” or “One China, One Taiwan.”²⁰ At the same time, the U.S. government assured Taiwan of support in managing its relationship with China, as seen above in the TRA.

U.S. Interests in Taiwan

The U.S. carefully defined its nuanced position on Taiwan in its three communiques with China and in the *Taiwan Relations Act*. This position was an elegant vehicle allowing the U.S. to have relations with both governments without engendering hostilities. What, however, are the U.S. interests in Taiwan?

1. Trade. China is the U.S.'s second largest trading partner after Canada, with trade in 2007 totaling approximately \$356.7 billion. Taiwan is its eighth largest partner, with trade in 2007 totaling around \$64.6 billion.²¹ The U.S. interests here are 1) to continue trading with both parties, whereas trade with the PRC is clearly more important (to put a number to it: about 5½ times as important); and 2) to avoid war in the region, which could potentially damage trade (e.g. through Chinese blockades or embargoes). In addition, a war in the region could potentially disrupt trade with Japan, the U.S.'s 4th largest trading partner.²²

19 “Taiwan Relations Act.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/tra02.htm>>.

20 “Joint Communiqué on Arms Sales to Taiwan.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique03.htm>>.

21 “Trade in Goods (Imports, Exports and Trade Balance) with China.” FTD Statistics – Country Data. U.S. Census Bureau. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5700.html#2007>>.

22 *ibid*

2. Leverage. The U.S. enjoys some leverage in relations with the PRC as long as the Taiwan question is unresolved. The U.S. interest here: keep the issue unresolved unless it can be resolved in a way that furthers other U.S. interests.²³
3. Taiwan as a model. Taiwan is considered to be “an Asian model for democratic development, particularly as a model for future PRC governance.”²⁴ The U.S. interest: maintain at least the current level of sovereignty and prevent Taiwan from being formally absorbed into the single-party PRC.
4. Military. The U.S. maintains an Air Force base on Taiwan, as well as arms sales, military contacts, and military cooperation with Taiwan. U.S. interest: keep Taiwan sovereign and maintain military contacts and arms sales.
5. Containment. I mention containment of communism only for historical reasons, as it was this policy that guided U.S. actions and recognition in China during the height of the Cold War. I no longer regard this point as a significant point of interest for U.S. foreign policy on both sides of the Strait today.

At this stage, it is important to note that there have been changes in U.S. interests since the three communiqués and the *Taiwan Relations Act*. Not only has containment ceased to be an issue (although it already had had reduced importance by the signing of the four documents regarding U.S. relations with the ROC and the PRC), but the ROC has become a democracy, complete with political pluralism. This, therefore, has made point 3 a U.S. interest.

23 Dumbaugh, Kerry. “CRS Report for Congress.” Federation of American Scientists. 20 April 2007: p4. 14 Jun. 2008
<<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

24 *ibid*

Recent Occurrences and their Effect on U.S. Foreign Policy Discourse with Regard to the Taiwan Question

In 1996, Taiwan held its first-ever democratic presidential election.²⁵ In 2000, the Taiwanese elected for the first time a president who was the leader of an oppositional party (in this case the DPP – Democratic Progressive Party), displaying a functioning political pluralism on the island.²⁶ These events may not have caused a change in U.S. policy toward Taiwan, but they did alter somewhat U.S. interests in the region.

As Taiwan was now a democracy, Taiwan's role as a model for Asia was born. This added an additional interest for the U.S. in keeping Taiwan from being absorbed by the PRC. Indeed, the Bush administration initially showed a great deal of support for the newly elected president in Taiwan. President Bush stated that he “would do 'whatever it took' to help defend Taiwan.”²⁷ Almost immediately thereafter, Bush approved the sale of a large arms package to Taiwan. He also allowed President Chen to visit the United States and meet with several members of Congress, as well as with then Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, all of which had previously been prohibited.²⁸

Later, however, relations between Taiwan and the U.S. began to cool as President Chen began making public statements such as the one he made in August of 2002, stating that there was “one country on either side of the Taiwan Strait.”²⁹ This and other actions on the part of President Chen eventually prompted the Bush administration to reiterate and clarify its position. While on a visit to the PRC in April 2004, just after Chen's re-election, Vice President Richard Cheney stated,

25 Tyler, Patrick E. “Taiwan Votes for President and Celebrates Democracy.” *New York Times* 23 March 1996: NA. *InfoTrac College Edition*. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

26 “Political earthquake in Taiwan” (Editorial). *New York Times* 20 March 2000: A24(L) A22(N). *InfoTrac College Edition*. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

27 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” *Federation of American Scientists*. 20 April 2007: p7. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

28 *ibid*

29 *ibid*

“We oppose unilateral efforts on either side to try to alter the current set of circumstances...”³⁰

Chen continued to strain relations, however. In January 2006, Chen stated that the National Unification Council would “cease to function.” This council had the purpose, at least theoretically, of eventually unifying the two parties.³¹ This action caused the State Department to issue “a rare written statement (March 2, 2006) saying it expected Taiwan authorities to 'unambiguously' and publicly clarify that the NUC had *not* been abolished but that it continued to exist.” It also stressed again that the U.S. “expected President Chen to reaffirm publicly his repeated assurances to maintain the status quo.”³²

The U.S., therefore, continued its policy of maintaining the status quo and supporting a peaceful, bi- or multi-lateral resolution to Taiwan's status. Taiwan's newfound democracy may have modified somewhat U.S. interests, but it did not alter U.S. policy.

Additional recent events have again altered the outlook for relations between Taiwan and the Chinese, and, therefore, relations between them and the U.S. In March 2008, the former authoritarian party, KMT, was elected, headed by President Ma Ying-jeou.³³ President Ma hopes to establish direct transport connections with the mainland and expand considerably economic relations.³⁴ As of June 13th, 2008, Taiwan had reached an agreement with the PRC on weekend charter flights,³⁵ and as of July 1st, the governments had agreed on guidelines allowing more mainland journalists onto the island.³⁶ He feels the starting point for any political talks, which he

30 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” Federation of American Scientists. 20 April 2007: p11. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

31 “National Unification Council.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Jul. 2008 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Unification_Council>.

32 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” Federation of American Scientists. 20 April 2007: p8. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

33 “Ma's horse comes in; Taiwan.” Economist (US) 29 March 2008: 55(US). InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 14 Jun. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

34 Wong, Edward. “Taiwan's Leader Outlines His Policy Toward China.” New York Times 19 June 2008: pA6. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

35 Wong, Edward. “Taiwan and China Reach Deal on Weekend Charter Flights.” New York Times 13 June 2008: A12. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

36 Wong, Edward “Taiwan: News Media Access Eased.” New York Times 1 July 2008: A8. InfoTrac College Edition.

would support, “should be the '1992 consensus,' in which both China and Taiwan agreed that there was but 'one China,' but begged to differ on how to define it.”³⁷

This easing of relations between Taiwan and the PRC may reduce the urgency of calls for action in altering U.S. foreign policy to match the current political climate between Taiwan and the PRC. There may still be some reasons to revisit U.S. policy on the issue, however.

Possible Future Alterations to U.S. Foreign Policy in Support of U.S. Interests in the Taiwan Strait

There are four distinct possibilities for the future of U.S. policy toward Taiwan.

1. Make no change to the current policy.
2. Support overtly Taiwanese independence.
3. Support the integration of Taiwan into the PRC.
4. Continue the current policy, but increase some areas of active support for Taiwan.

On closer analysis, only two of the possibilities seem to be realistic in keeping with U.S. interests in the region. The second possibility (supporting Taiwanese independence overtly), though idealistic, is unrealistic and would be a dangerous break from previous U.S. policies and promises. It is based on the belief that the PRC would not be willing to go to war with the United States over Taiwan.³⁸ This approach would be in line with U.S. interests in maintaining military connections and furthering Taiwan as an Asian model for democracy, but it would seriously endanger other U.S. interests. It would risk disruptions in trade with three of the U.S.'s top ten trading partners, endangering trade in the amount of \$656 billion. The U.S. would also lose its Taiwan leverage in the future. Indeed, that leverage could then become a point of anger for China and damage U.S.-

Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

37 “Ma's horse comes in; Taiwan.” *Economist (US)* 29 March 2008: 55(US). *InfoTrac College Edition*. Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 14 Jun. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

38 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” *Federation of American Scientists*. 20 April 2007: p29. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

China relations for years or decades to come, even if war were avoided. It is also questionable if the U.S. could count on support from other nations if it came to war with China over the issue. It is possible that other countries would not rush in to help the U.S. if it were seen as the aggressor in a war with a country that is a top trading partner for many other countries. If historical alliances did hold, we could expect to see the world separated into at least two camps, with countries lined up behind both sides. Add to that the current quagmire in Iraq and general public wariness of wars with American casualties, and this becomes an option to be avoided almost at all costs. This extreme version may be an unlikely scenario, but avoiding conflict with China is highly desirable, even barring all-out war.

The third possibility is also incompatible with U.S. interests, as it would violate all of them except trade. In addition, if Taiwan were to become part of the PRC, this “would expand the PRC's naval-air projection into the Western Pacific and potentially key sea-lanes important to Japan.”³⁹ Japan currently relies largely on the U.S. to shield it from harm. Taiwan's integration into the PRC, and the subsequent loss of U.S. military connections in the region, could cause it to rethink this reliance,⁴⁰ possibly even spurring an arms race between the two Asian powers. Also, Taiwan's importance as an Asian model for democracy should not be underestimated. Finally, U.S. credibility would be seriously damaged by not continuing its previous policies and protecting Taiwanese democracy.

We are then left with the first and fourth possibilities, which have in common that they maintain the current framework for U.S. relations with the PRC and the ROC. If the U.S. were to adopt the fourth possibility, what sort of “active support” should it increase? There are myriad options set out within the Congressional Research Service Report for Congress from April 20th, 2007 by Kerry Dumbaugh. This report, however, predates the newest political developments on

39 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” Federation of American Scientists. 20 April 2007: p5. 14 Jun. 2008
<<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

40 *ibid*

Taiwan. The ideas in the report range from supporting democratic reforms in the Taiwanese Government and actively discouraging posturing toward independence, to putting more pressure on the PRC to remove its missiles from the Strait and repeal its 2005 secession law. Of the wide variety of options for maneuvering within the current framework, the best would be a policy of increased transparency in U.S.-Taiwan relations, given the recent apparent détente between the two countries. An increase in overt support for Taiwan, including more visible visits between the U.S. and Taiwan would send a message to the PRC that the U.S. is still serious about defending its interests on Taiwan.

Finally, we have the first option. Although it is often unpopular to do “nothing,” in the sense of not changing anything, it is sometimes the best policy. Although the fourth option may have made sense even a few months ago, the first option again seems the most sensible given the current easing of tensions between the ROC and the PRC. The U.S. sent naval ships to the coast of Taiwan to send a message to the PRC during the ROC's first democratic elections in 1996.⁴¹ President George W. Bush also stated he would do “whatever it took” to defend Taiwan in 2001.⁴² The U.S. position, therefore, is clear. As long as the two parties seem to be working toward a peaceful resolution in line with previous U.S. communications on the topic there is no reason to get involved, particularly when neither side seems to wish U.S. involvement. The U.S. has also promised as part of its 1982 “six assurances” to Taiwan not to mediate between the parties.⁴³

In light of current political developments between Taiwan and the PRC, I see no reason to make changes to U.S. policy on the issue of Taiwan's status. The U.S. should, however, continue to make clear its support for bi- or multi-lateral agreements (i.e. involving the PRC, ROC, and the

41 Tyler, Patrick E. “Taiwan Votes for President and Celebrates Democracy.” *New York Times* 23 March 1996: NA. [InfoTrac College Edition](http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com). Gale Group, Thomson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

42 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” *Federation of American Scientists*. 20 April 2007: p7. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

43 Dumbaugh. “CRS Report for Congress.” *Federation of American Scientists*. 20 April 2007: p24. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>

United States) toward resolution of this issue. There should also be no doubt as to U.S. firmness in protecting Taiwan from unilateral action on the side of the PRC. These positions are positions the United States has maintained since 1982.

Possible Future Resolution of the Taiwan Question

Although it is not within the scope of U.S. Taiwan policy to move toward any sort of resolution of Taiwan's status, it would be a good idea to consider the type of solution that would be acceptable to U.S. interests, assuming that Taiwan will not forever remain in its current state of limbo. It is clear from current U.S. policy that any resolution must be achieved by both the ROC and the PRC, and that no side may act unilaterally. What other interests might the U.S. wish to maintain in a resolution?

As mentioned above, the U.S. has military interests on Taiwan, Taiwan serves as a model for Asian democracy, and Taiwan has given the U.S. a certain amount of leverage in dealings with the PRC. All of these interests would be affected by a resolution. In addition, Japan's interests would also be affected, as mentioned above. As Japan is a key political ally and economic partner of the United States, and as Japan derives much of its defense from the U.S. shield, any affects on Japan must also be considered.

What sort of resolution could be expected? The only likely resolution is the eventual integration of Taiwan into the PRC, likely along the “one Country, two Systems” lines seen in Hong Kong.⁴⁴ This system allows Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy, allowing it to run most of its own affairs, including separate visa and immigration laws. Under this system, the PRC is responsible only for foreign relations and defense. However, because the British failed to push very hard for it, democracy remains elusive in Hong Kong.⁴⁵ In keeping with interest three above

44 “One Country, Two Systems.” GovHK. Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government. 6 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sar5/e12.htm>>.

45 “Democracy Deferred.” Economist (US), 30 June 2007: 6(US). InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson

(Taiwan as a model for Asian democracy), democracy would have to be secured in any agreement for the absorption of Taiwan into the PRC. The United States could perhaps use the leverage of its military connections with Taiwan to push for this security, trading its military connections for a democratic and largely autonomous Taiwan. Since Hong Kong is half democratic and is supposed to be on the way toward democracy (even though this has been delayed by Beijing),⁴⁶ it does not seem entirely unlikely that Taiwan could remain a democratic, autonomous region under PRC rule as a further democratic “experiment” for the PRC.

As mentioned above, steps would have to be taken to ensure Japan that its shipping lanes would not be violated, and to solidify Japanese security. This could take the form of tri-lateral agreements between the PRC, the U.S., and Japan, in which all parties agree on the terms of shipping and the military arrangement in the western Pacific, and that any violation of this agreement by one partner would be viewed with “grave concern” by the others. This seems to me to be the best course of action in the long term were Taiwan and the PRC to come closer to agreeing on Taiwanese integration. This arrangement would secure the U.S.'s most important interests in the region, while providing a compromise that all parties (the U.S., the ROC, the PRC, and Japan) could accept.

Conclusion

U.S. policy should remain the same in the middle term, barring any dramatic changes or deterioration in the situation in the Taiwan Strait. In the longer term, the U.S. should seek to maintain stability in the region (in line with current policy) and support Taiwan democracy. In addition, the U.S. should not stand in the way of an eventual clarification of Taiwan's status, as long as this clarification is produced by both sides. The U.S. should, however, take steps to ensure that

Learning. 14 Jun. 2008.

46 *ibid*

any resolution is fair toward Taiwan, and that such a resolution would not overly harm other U.S. interests in the area and not destabilize the region, particularly with regard to Japan. In this way, the U.S. can further its most important interests in the western Pacific; maintain Taiwan's role as a model for Asian democracy, thereby sustaining U.S. credibility abroad; and ensure political and economic stability in the region.

Bibliography

Sources alphabetized according to author, if available; then underlined source; followed by article title

- Adams, Jonathan. "Taiwan Officials Quit in Diplomatic Furor." New York Times 7 May 2008: A8. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 14 Jun. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.
- "About American Institute in Taiwan (AIT)." American Institute in Taiwan. American Institute in Taiwan. 5 Jul. 2008 <http://www.ait.org.tw/en/about_ait/>.
- "Sino-Soviet Amur Conflict." American University Trade and Environment Database. Ed. Dr. Lee, James R. American University. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.american.edu/TED/ice/3sinosov.htm>>.
- Chen Ching-chih. "Taiwan belongs to the Taiwanese." Taipei Times 7 Jul. 2005: p8. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.taipetimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2005/07/07/2003262545>>.
- Dumbaugh, Kerry. "CRS Report for Congress." Federation of American Scientists. 20 April 2007. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://ftp.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33684.pdf>>
- "Democracy Deferred." Economist (US), 30 June 2007: 6(US). InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 14 Jun. 2008.
- "Ma's horse comes in; Taiwan." Economist (US) 29 March 2008: 55(US). InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 14 Jun. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.
- "Trade in Goods (Imports, Exports and Trade Balance) with China." FTD Statistics – Country Data. U.S. Census Bureau. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5700.html#2007>>.
- "One Country, Two Systems." GovHK. Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government. 6 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sar5/e12.htm>>.
- McCormick, James M. American Foreign Policy and Process. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- "Political earthquake in Taiwan" (Editorial). New York Times 20 March 2000: A24(L) A22(N). InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.
- Tyler, Patrick E. "Taiwan Votes for President and Celebrates Democracy." New York Times 23 March 1996: NA. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.
- Wang Guangya. "Statement by Chinese Permanent Representative Wang Guangya at General Committee of 59th Session of General Assembly on 'Taiwan's participation in the United Nations'." Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations. 15 Sept. 2004. 5 Jul. 2008 <<http://www.china-un.org/eng/zt/twwt/t157666.htm>>.

“Shanghai Communiqué.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008
<<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique01.htm>>.

“Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations.” Taiwan Documents Project.
Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008
<<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique02.htm>>.

“Taiwan Relations Act.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents Project. 14 Jun. 2008
<<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/tra02.htm>>.

“Joint Communiqué on Arms Sales to Taiwan.” Taiwan Documents Project. Taiwan Documents
Project. 14 Jun. 2008 <<http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique03.htm>>.

Wong, Edward. “Taiwan and China Reach Deal on Weekend Charter Flights.” New York Times 13
June 2008: A12. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008.
<<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

Wong, Edward “Taiwan: News Media Access Eased.” New York Times 1 July 2008: A8. InfoTrac
College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008. <[http://infotrac-](http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com)
[college.thomsonlearning.com](http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com)>.

Wong, Edward. “Taiwan's Leader Outlines His Policy Toward China.” New York Times 19 June
2008: pA6. InfoTrac College Edition. Gale Group, Thompson Learning. 5 Jul. 2008.
<<http://infotrac-college.thomsonlearning.com>>.

“Taiwan.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Jul. 2008
<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan#History>>.

“China and the United Nations.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Jul. 2008
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_and_the_United_Nations>.

“National Unification Council.” Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Jul. 2008
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Unification_Council>.