TAIWAN AND THE U.S. PIVOT TO ASIA:
New Realities in the Region?

EDITED BY
Shihoko Goto

Wilson Center

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Report of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars' Conference on U.S.-Taiwan Relations

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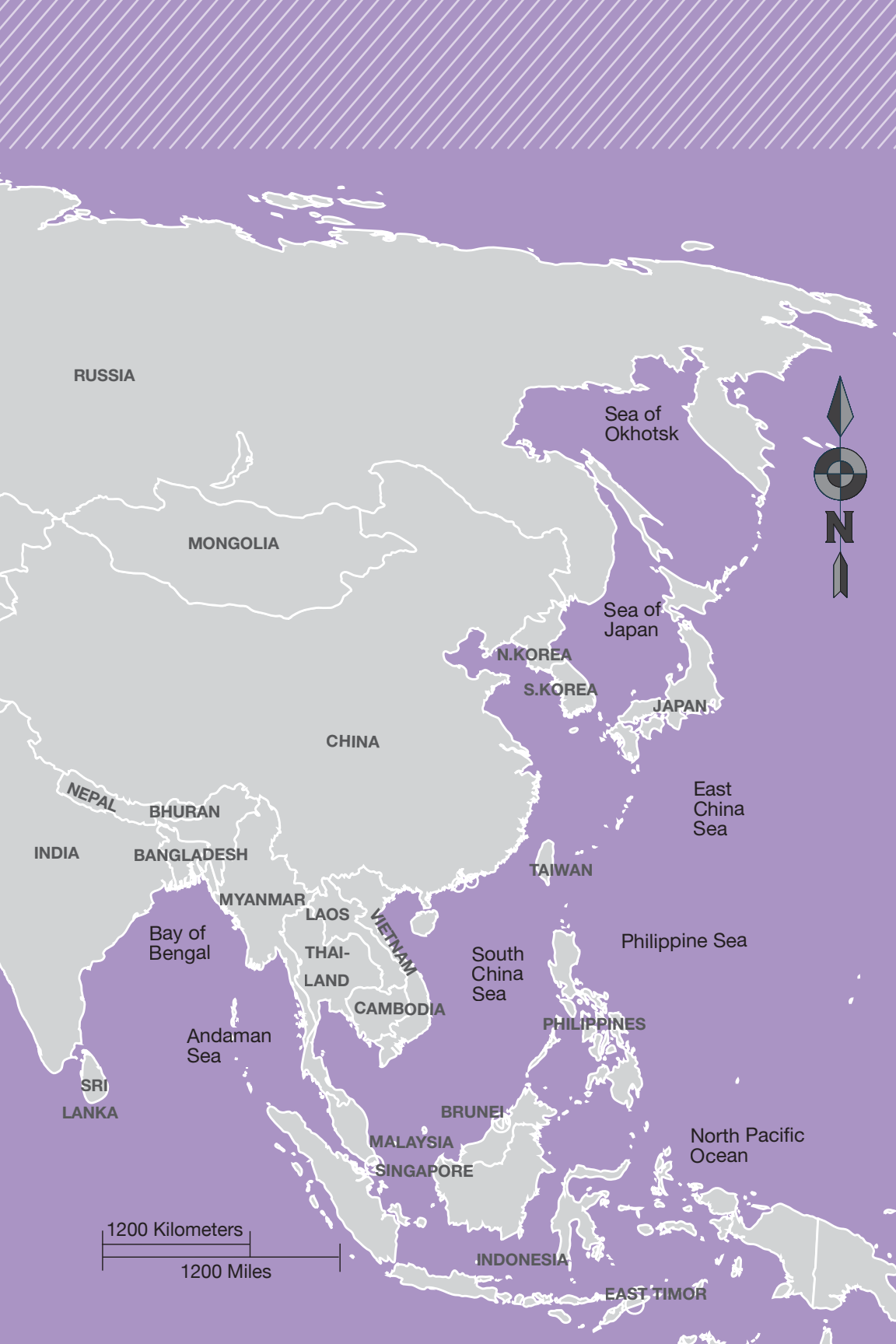
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SHIHOKO GOTO is the Northeast Asia associate at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars' Asia Program.

Introduction

SHIHOKO GOTO

Change is afoot across Northeast Asia. Japan, South Korea, and China are all under new leaderships from early 2013, while Taiwan introduced yet another cabinet reshuffle earlier in the year.

Change is under way on the other side of the Pacific too, as the United States moves forward with its military as well as political and economic pivot towards Asia. China's rapid military modernization has led Washington to step up efforts to increase its presence in the region. Developments in recent years have only heightened wariness in the United States about potential risks in Asia.

Certainly, there is no shortage of tensions and disturbing rhetoric in the region. China and Japan remain at loggerheads over ownership of a handful of islands in the East China Sea, while Japan has other territorial disputes with South Korea as well as Russia. Meanwhile, all Asian nations remain wary of North Korea's nuclear aspirations, and possibilities of a resolution with Pyongyang remain murky at best.

EVOLVING U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

But where does Taiwan fit into this new order of Northeast Asian conflicts and competing interests? In decades past, tensions between Taipei and Beijing were regarded as one of the biggest risks threatening the region's stability. In recent years, however, even the most bearish of cross-Strait analysts would hardly make that case. In fact, some argue that relations

between Taiwan and China have so greatly improved that the greater risk is that of further integration of the two sides, rather than conflict.

For the United States, the question is where Taiwan fits in its rebalancing strategy towards Asia. To date, Taiwan has been a beneficiary of the U.S. presence in the region. Yet as Taipei leans more toward the mainland both economically and politically, should the United States reconsider its partnership with Taiwan? Can and should Taiwan do more to enhance its self-defense capabilities? How will Taipei's closer ties with Beijing affect its relations with Washington?

At a Woodrow Wilson Center conference held in late February, three academics and a senior staff member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee came together to discuss Taiwan's role in the U.S. military, political, and economic pivot to the Asia-Pacific.

Nien Su, the senior director for Asia-Pacific of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, stressed the need for the United States to continue nurturing its relations with Taiwan, noting the robust ties between the two that go beyond security interests. He emphasized the strong investment links between Taiwan and the United States in particular, adding that furthering bilateral relations across the board would be in the best interest of both.

The University of Miami's **June Teufel Dreyer**, however, argued that as Taiwan's relations with China deepen further, it would not be in the United States' interest to expect Taipei, as a matter of self-interest, to play an active role in the U.S. pivot to Asia. She called for Taipei to placate both Washington and Beijing, while keeping as low a profile as possible.

Dennis Hickey of Missouri State University, on the other hand, said that Taipei could aspire to play a key role in countering Beijing's military growth and be an even more important U.S. military ally. At the same time, he cautioned that Taiwan could be adversely affected by growing hostilities between the United States and China.

As for the Naval War College's **James Holmes**, he stressed the need for Taiwan to augment its own defense capabilities, rather than depending heavily on U.S. support. By increasing its defense spending, Taipei would be able to play a crucial role in completing the U.S. pivot, he said.

How the United States will move forward with its pivot to Asia remains in question. Yet it is clear that Washington's relations with Taiwan are

evolving as economic and security realities in the region change. Taiwan continues to play a key role in defining those realities, and the following three essays should act as a starting point in examining where U.S.-Taiwan relations may be heading.

March 2013
Washington DC

JUNE TEUFEL DREYER is a professor at the University of Miami's department of political science.

What Does the U.S. Focus on Asia Mean for Taiwan?

JUNE TEUFEL DREYER

In a November 2011 address to the Australian parliament, President Barack Obama announced his intention to expand the U.S. role in Asia. Soon to become known as the "pivot toward Asia," the shift in emphasis was described in innocuous language. The United States wished to play a larger role in shaping the region and its future by helping to ensure that international law and norms were respected, that commerce and freedom of navigation would not be impeded, that emerging powers could build trust with their neighbors, and that disagreements would be resolved peacefully without threats or coercion.

Though avowedly not directed against any third country, the pivot was widely interpreted, including in Beijing, as being aimed at balancing China. The Chinese media have already objected to one manifestation of the pivot, and its associated military facet, the Air Sea battle: the dispatch of U.S. marines to Darwin, southern Australia. Nor is Beijing pleased with the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a free trade agreement that would add eight or more states[1] to the three members of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) as well as broadening the scope of the matters included therein, since it concerns not only trade matters but sets binding regulations, on the service sector, investments, patents, copyrights, government procurement,

financial regulation, and labor and environmental standards. The pact is aimed at strengthening the United States' economic role in the region. China, already the dominant economic power in the area, is conspicuous by its absence.

Obama's initiative was prompted by the increasing assertiveness of the People's Republic of China (PRC). In the previous year, Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi had taken umbrage at U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's remark at a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Association of Southeast States (ASEAN) that territorial disputes should be settled through peaceful negotiation. [2] Yang followed this up by informing the members that they must face reality: China was a large state, and other states were small, reportedly looking straight at Singaporean foreign minister George Yeo as he said it.[3] Official media accused the United States of meddling in an area that it was not part of. [4]

A few months later, when Tokyo arrested a Chinese fishing boat captain whose vessel had rammed two Japanese Coast Guard vessels, Beijing levied painful economic sanctions on Japan until he was released, and followed this up with regular maritime patrols in areas Japan considers part of its territorial waters. There were standoffs with the Philippines in 2012 over Scarborough Shoal in 2012 and, in 1994 and 1999, at Mischief Reef, as well as several incidents involving Vietnam. Also in 2012, Indian naval vessels bound for Seoul were greeted by a People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) ship that "escorted" them through "Chinese" waters.[5] The collective intent of these endeavors appears to be to establish the international legitimacy of their control over the East China and South China seas.

Further, the annual U.S. Department of Defense report on the PRC's military power catalogue a growing inventory of impressive capabilities including cyber attacks, stealthy planes, cruise and ballistic missiles, new classes of nuclear submarines, and an aircraft carrier. Beijing seems intent on establishing an anti-access area-denial (A2/AD) capability to support Chinese claims in the South China and East China seas. Since ensuring freedom of navigation along the sea lanes of communication (SLOCs) is a core mission of the United States Navy, this worries American defense planners.[6]

Taiwan's geographic position makes it an important part of any strategy aimed at constraining the expansion of the PRC's territorial claims.

Absorption of the island into China's territorial waters would mean those waters stretched close to the shores of Japan—the southern Japanese island of Yonaguni is a scant 67 miles from the coast of Taiwan, and strategically important submarine as well as surface shipping passages would be impacted should the surrounding waters fall under the PRC's control. Hence, any effort to operationalize the pivot must consider what part the Taiwan could play in the exercise thereof.

Taiwan is part of the PRC's first island chain and has been described by Chinese analysts as a crucial link in its plans to break out of what they see as the encirclement of their country by an American-led coalition aimed at containing the rise of China. One analyst sees Taiwan, the center of the island chain arc, as a shackle for the PLAN. Its incorporation into the PRC would sever the chain at mid-point as well as providing the PLA with bases, harbors, and radar emplacements useful for outward power projection. He describes the Chinese coast plus Taiwan as forming a T-shaped position thus facilitating access to the second island chain and ultimately breaking out into the open ocean of the Pacific.[7]

Hence it would seem that the implementation of the pivot would be severely constrained were Taiwan to be subsumed into the PRC, whether formally or informally. Assuming that it is not, any consideration of Taiwan's role must consider two intertwined questions: whether Washington is willing to include Taiwan in the pivot, and whether Taipei is willing to be included. For the past decade, the United States has, while criticizing efforts by either side to change the status quo, seemed to many citizens of Taiwan to be more critical of anything that Taiwan does that could be construed as changing the status quo than it has when China does. Perhaps the most salient example of this occurred in December 2003 when, with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at his side, U.S. President George W. Bush, announced "we oppose any unilateral decision, by either China or Taiwan, to change the status quo. And the comments and actions made by the leader of Taiwan indicated that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally to change the status quo, which we oppose."[8]

While one may disagree on whether the administration was being even-handed or not, there is little disagreement about how it was received in Taiwan. According to the island's minority Democratic Progressive Party

(DPP), this and other more subtle displays of annoyance by the Bush administration played a major role in tipping the 2008 election toward unification-oriented Ma Ying-jeou, who was born in Hong Kong to Chinese parents.[9] Since then, Ma's Kuomintang (KMT) administration has pursued a policy of accommodation to the PRC with official Washington commenting with evident approval that it welcomed the trend of amicable cross-strait relations. The cost of this, however, was to move Taiwan ever closer into the PRC's ambit. Among other steps the Ma government has taken to do so have been:

- signing the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement, a preferential trade arrangement with China that reduces tariffs and commercial barriers between the two sides as well as providing for mutual investment and banking arrangements
- facilitating arrangements for the entry of Chinese tourists to Taiwan
- rejecting the application for license renewal or new licensing for independent media[10] outlets while supporting the sale of our outlets of the Next Media Group to a consortium in which a pro-Chinese businessman has a controlling interest.[11]
- easing the opportunities for Chinese to study at Taiwan's educational institutions and making them eligible for scholarships thereto

While Ma defends these policies as economic rather than political, they have greatly increased Taiwan's dependence on China. The PRC's share of Taiwan's exports exceeded 40 percent in 2011, with the problems in the country's economy caused by a slight decline, to 38.1 percent in the first half of 2012, showing how vulnerable to the PRC's policies Taiwan had become: The decrease was not the result of a change in attitude by Ma's administration but by a Beijing restructuring known as "vacating the cage for new birds" that aims to replace imports with domestically produced goods.[12] Ma must also be aware that, prior to the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations in 1972, Tokyo also tried to follow a policy of separating economics from politics, *seikei bunri* which Beijing flatly rejected. Eventually, with the strong encouragement of major Japanese businesses which saw big profits in China's then-new industrialization drive, the Japanese government

abandoned *seikei bunri* and opened negotiations on mutual recognition. Only in abstract theory are economics and politics separable.

The narrowing of viewpoints in the mass media has also caused consternation, culminating in a January 2013 mass rally, in which an estimated hundred thousand or more people protested in front of the presidential offices, to no avail.[13] Those members of the opposition party who served in the previous administration have been indicted on various grounds. While many have been acquitted, the prosecutions have taken a financial and psychological toll that many consider aimed at intimidation. The large number of tourists who enter are thought to have included some who are intelligence operatives. Critics remark ruefully that the country has a bipartisan government: its indigenous KMT and the PRC's Chinese Communist Party.

Although the overwhelming majority of citizens have in poll after poll expressed a desire not to unify with China[14], the absorption of Taiwan into China may be reaching a de facto if not a de jure tipping point past which reversal is impossible. If this is the case, it is difficult to see how the United States could gain any advantage from incorporating Taiwan into a pivot that is aimed at constraining China. For decades, and in spite of the Taiwan Relations Act's stipulation that "the United States will make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability"[15], Washington has been unwilling to sell items of comparable quality to those being acquired by the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Part of the reason is to avoid angering China, another is the infiltration of Taiwan's military and intelligence bureaucracies by Chinese operatives. It does not make sense to sell advanced weaponry to a country that would transfer it to the United States' most likely adversary.

There are ways in which a Taiwan government that is willing to participate in the pivot—which so far the Ma government, anxious to keep amicable cross-strait relations, has not—could be useful. Military analysts have pointed out that peacetime air surveillance could be fused with other sources of information to form a more accurate assessment of PLA doctrine and tactics. And if Taiwan had the capacity to interdict single points in the PLA's A2/AD, the U.S. military's operational burden would be reduced concomitantly.[16]

For both the United States and Taiwan, the risks of participating in the pivot are substantial. Taiwan's current government seems to favor gradual incorporation into the PRC, whether formally or informally, which would be disadvantageous to the United States. Taiwan fears, with good reason, incurring the anger of a heavily armed close neighbor that has over 1500 missiles pointed at it, no strategic depth from which to defend itself, and a United States government that seems fickle about its relationship with the island. The administration has refused to sell F-16 C/Ds to Taiwan, which would in any case be no match for the new fighters being deployed by the PLA Air Force. It has not suggested that Taiwan join the TPP.[17]

Moreover, Washington already has difficulties in trying to better relations with Beijing while vowing that it will pursue a pivot policy clearly intended to balance it, and frequently states that no major world problem can be solved without the PRC's assent. It is well understood that the PRC attempts to use Taiwan as a bargaining chip in these negotiations. Clearly, Taiwan cannot count on the United States to guarantee its security, and the United States is loath to guarantee the security of a Taiwan whose administration seems to be encouraging its incorporation into China.

Should the two sides agree that cooperation is in their best interests, confidence-building measures are a crucial prerequisite. The Taiwan government must halt and, to the extent possible, reverse its efforts to integrate with China, demonstrate that it is capable of protecting military technology from the PRC's intelligence operatives, and show that it is willing to defend itself from invasion. The United States must show itself willing to transfer its military technology and expertise, and to include Taiwan in the TPP negotiations. Under current circumstances, both sides seem to lack the motivation to undertake these measures.

As matters stand, to the extent that Taiwan's security is affected by the pivot, its position is more, not less, precarious. In these circumstances, Taipei's best strategy would seem to be to try to placate both Washington and Beijing, while keeping as low a profile as possible. The response of Taiwan's foreign ministry to a query on what part, if any, the nation could play in the pivot reinforces this hypothesis. Averring that it does not believe the pivot is aimed at containment of China 向亞洲再平衡」政策並非「圍堵」中國大陸之政策, the ministry states that "in order to guarantee our national

security while we are improving the cross-strait relationship, we also need to strengthen relations with the USA and other friendly countries, and to constantly enhance our national defense so that the sovereignty of the ROC and Taiwan's security can be maintained. The security commitment from the United States is vital to peace and stability over the Taiwan Strait, and to bring us more confidence when making peace with mainland China. The above meets the interest of all parties concerned in the region."[18]

NOTES

1. Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam as well as the NAFTA group of Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. The Japan, the Philippines, , South Korea, and Thailand have also expressed interest in joining. For details, see, e.g, Office of the United States Trade Representative http://www.ustr.gov/tpp; Daniel Ten Kate and Margaret Talev, "Obama Eyes $108 Billion Annual Asia Prize Vying With China Trade," Bloomberg Business Week, December 27, 2012 http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-12-27/obama-eyes-108-billion-annual-asia-prize-vying-with-china-trade.
2. "China: U.S. Comments On South China Sea Are an 'Attack', Associated Press, July 25, 2010.
3. John Pomfret, "U.S. Takes a Tougher Line with China," *Washington Post*, July30, 2010.
4. "Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi Refutes Fallacies On the South China Sea Issue," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, July 26, 2010 ,"South China Sea Issue Should Only Be Resolved By Concerned Parties, Vice FM Says," *Renmin Ribao*, August 6, 2012.
5. Ananth Krishnan, "In South China Sea, a Surprise Escort for Indian Ships," *The Hindu*, June 14, 2012. http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3524965.ece?css=print
6. The latest report can be accessed at http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2012_CMPR_Final.pdf
7. 將雨， "島連與中國海軍向遠揚的發展" 艦 截 武器 (Jiang Yu, "The Island Chain and Far Seas Development of the Chinese Navy," Naval Weapons, No. 12,pp. 30–31. Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, *Red Star Over the Pacific and the Challenge to U.S. Maritime Strategy*(Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2010) pp. 53–54, interpret this essay in Mahanian control of the sea terms.
8. http://edition.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/12/09/bush.china.taiwan/index/html.
9. Other issues included the Kuomintang's promise to improve economic growth, and concerns about corruption.

10. Jimmy Lai, "Taiwan's Less-Free Media: The Government of President Ma Ying-jeou is Tightening Controls on Taiwan's Free Press," *Wall Street Journal*, December 28, 2010.
11. William Lowther, "FAPA Calls On Government To Stop Sale of Media Group," *Taipei Times*, December 2, 2012.
12. Focus Taiwan, July 11, 2012. http://focustaiwan.tw/ShowNews/WebNews_Detail.aspx?ID=201207110042&Type=aTOD
13. There is a large discrepancy between numbers reported by the government and those claimed by the marchers, ranging from 60,000 to 100,000.
14. see, e.g. http://www1.tvbs.com.tw/tvbs2011/pch/tvbs_poll_center.aspx
15. The Taiwan Relations Act, Public Law 96–8, 96th Congress, April 10, 1979, Section 3 (a)
16. Mark Stokes and I.C. Russell Hsiao, "Taiwan's Role in the Air Sea Battle," *Asian Eye*, Project 2049, April 16, 2012. http://blog.project 2049.net/2012/04/taiwans-role-in-air-sea-battle.html.
17 Although Washington is hesitant to anger Beijing by including Taiwan in the TPP, it has argued that there must be a sequence: the U.S.-Taiwan Trade and Investment Framework (TIFA) must be concluded before it is willing to discuss the TPP. For well over a decade, U.S. negotiators have reported a lack of genuine commitment by Taiwan even to thrashing out a TIFA, given the political clout of Taiwan's agricultural, pharmaceuticals, and software sectors, each of which believes its interests would be adversely impacted by an agreement with the U.S. In part because of its own recognition of the strength of domestic resistance, Taiwan's political leaders, Ma included, have typically said that they envisage readiness to join TPP in "about ten years."
18. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China, communication to the author, January 22, 2013.

The U.S. Pivot to the Asia-Pacific: Implications for Taiwan

DENNIS VAN VRANKEN HICKEY

An important shift in U.S. foreign policy is underway. The United States is placing a higher priority on its economic, political and security relationships with the Asia-Pacific region. This study outlines the central features of the U.S. pivot to Asia. It also shows how the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC or Taiwan) could stand to benefit from this strategic shift in U.S. policy. In conclusion, the paper suggests that, while Taiwan might gain in some meaningful ways from the pivot, the rebalancing might also pose some risks for Taipei and other U.S. friends and allies in the Western Pacific.

THE U.S. PIVOT TO ASIA

In recent years, U.S. decision-makers came to the realization that the Asia-Pacific region is critically important to US interests, and that it will only increase in importance in future years. This perception was emphasized recently in a U.S. Department of Defense report which declared that *"we will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region* (italics in original document)."[1]

A number of considerations serve as drivers for the adjustment in U.S. policy. With respect to economics, the Asia-Pacific (which includes India)

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is now United States' largest source for imports and its second largest export region after North America. The pivot is intended to support the United States' central economic role in the region as the country continues its efforts to recover from the worldwide economic tsunami. For example, Washington is ramping up its campaign to establish the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a "high-standard" multilateral free trade agreement.

In terms of political considerations, several Asia-Pacific countries are emerging as major players in global politics. These states include the People's Republic of China (PRC or China), India, the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan. Others are increasingly important on a regional level. Consequently, the United States is accelerating efforts to more intensely engage these governments in bilateral and multilateral dialogues, exchanges and forums. This reflects what Hillary Clinton, then U.S. Secretary of State, described as a "sustained commitment" to "forward-deployed diplomacy" in the region.[2]

It is clear that economic and political factors have helped shape the transformation of U.S. policy. But many analysts contend that strategic considerations—particularly the rise of China—are chiefly responsible for the pivot to Asia.

U.S. security analysts contend that actual defense spending is understated by Beijing, and that the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) budget has been trending upward for decades. The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) estimates that China's military budget could have been as high as $183 billion in 2011—double the stated budget.[3] The PLA is funding weapons systems designed to boost its ability to conduct asymmetrical warfare in a conflict with the United States or other countries. For example, U.S. military reports that "China confirmed it is developing an anti-ship ballistic missile… intended to provide the PLA the capacity to attack large ships, particularly aircraft carriers, in the Western Pacific Ocean."[4] U.S. officials have also warned that, while cross-strait relations have improved, "China's military shows no sign of slowing its efforts to prepare for Taiwan Strait contingencies."[5] Perhaps most worrisome for U.S. defense planners, however, is what some view as a recent pattern of belligerent PRC foreign policy behavior. Since 2010, China's assertiveness in the South China Sea and the East China Sea has set off alarm bells in many Asian capitals and Washington, DC.

THE U.S. PIVOT AND TAIWAN

What does the pivot mean for Taiwan? How might Taipei benefit from the shift in U.S. policy? Will Taiwan play any role in Washington's rebalancing strategy? As with any foreign policy initiative, many questions have been raised.

There are some who fear that, while Washington bolsters it linkages with other regional governments, Taipei is being ignored. During an interview with the author, Dr. Joseph Wu, the Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) representative to the US, voiced such concerns.

"The security relations between the US and Japan have been streamlined and Japan has been urged to invest more [in defense]. And if you look at the security cooperation between the US and Korea, they are joining in military exercises on a larger and larger scale. Look at US-Australia relations, US-Philippine relation, US-Singapore relations, US-India relations—they are all strengthening—even US-Vietnam relations. But look at Taiwan. The US administration's reaction to Taiwan seems that "oh, you're doing just fine with China, go ahead and do more." And I don't know if that is in line with the US pivot or US redeployment in the Asia-Pacific," he said.[6]

Domestic critics of the Barrack Obama administration are harsher. Some accuse the president of "appeasement" and make claims that, while "China is on the march in Asia," Obama is "cozying up to Beijing with a wink and a nod."[7]

To be sure, Taiwan is not playing a high-profile role in the execution of the strategic shift in U.S. policy. But Taipei has not been forgotten.

For a start, U.S. officials at the highest levels of government have repeatedly reiterated Washington's support for Taipei. During Congressional hearings, Kurt M. Campbell, then U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, testified that "an important part of this turn to Asia is maintaining a robust and multidimensional unofficial relationship with Taiwan and consistent with this interest is the U.S.' strong and enduring commitment to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait."[8] In November 2011, Secretary Clinton declared that "we have a strong relationship with Taiwan, an important security and economic partner."[9] In March 2012, she boasted that "we've strengthened

our unofficial relationship with Taiwan."[10] The discussion below explains how the pivot contributes to political, economic and security ties between Washington and Taipei.

Political Ties

With respect to political ties, the United States is working to elevate "unofficial" linkages with Taiwan. As Secretary Campbell explained, "we are actively exploring ways to raise the level of our meetings with Taiwan."[11] The effort is beginning to yield some dividends. In September 2011, Suresh Kumar, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, journeyed to Taiwan to discuss trade and political issues, the most senior American official to visit Taipei in more than five years. In 2012, the U.S. military released a photograph of Dr. Andrew Yang, ROC Deputy Minister of Defense, making an "unofficial" visit to the Pentagon. During an interview with the author, Deputy Minister Yang revealed that "during this year (2012) I've made at least nineteen trips to Washington and have conducted very high level discussions with my counterparts." [12]

In addition to raising the level of bilateral contacts, the United States continues to support Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations—particularly the International Civil Aviation Organization and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change—and protests any moves by the UN to identify the island as a province of China or otherwise determine its political status. It is also noteworthy that in September 2012, the US announced that visitors from Taiwan would enjoy visa free status under the country's Visa Waiver Program (VWP).

Economic Ties

The United States maintains a robust economic relationship with Taiwan. Despite the recent shifts in global economic trends, Taiwan is America's tenth largest trading partner "with $67 billion in total (two way) goods trade during 2011."[13] That same year, Taiwan was the United States' 15th largest goods export market (and sixth largest agriculture export market) and Taiwan was the nation's 10th largest supplier of goods.

In February, 2013, the two sides agreed to resume stalled talks under the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) after a six year hiatus. Negotiations had been delayed due to a quarrel over US beef exports containing ractopamine (Taiwan eased the ban on U.S. beef in July 2012). Taipei hopes that the discussions will pave the way for membership in the TPP. Securing TPP membership is one of Taipei's top foreign policy goals as it is seen as a means to avoid being marginalized in the global marketplace."[14] Thus, resumption of the TIFA talks represents a breakthrough for Taipei.

Security Ties

U.S. security ties with Taiwan are guided by the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the so-called Six Assurances, the Three Communiqués and a series of statements, proclamations and secret promises. Too much ink already has been spilled analyzing the nuances of these documents. Suffice it to say that they often appear contradictory and confusing.

In 2011, Taiwan was the largest purchaser of U.S. defense articles and services in the world.[15] Although U.S. officials do not draw a clear linkage between the pivot and the massive arms transfers to Taiwan, the pivot is often mentioned during briefings justifying the arms transfers.[16]

The 2010 and 2011 arms sales are "comparable or greater than at any other period in the history of U.S.-Taiwan unofficial relations since the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act."[17] The former sale included helicopters and PAC-3 "Patriot" missiles for Taiwan's air defenses, while the most notable portion of the latter package was its provision for an upgrade for Taiwan's F-16 A/B fighter fleet.

U.S. officials will not rule out future arms sales. On April 26, 2012, Robert Nabors, White House director of legislative affairs, wrote that a sale of additional warplanes "warrants serious consideration given the growing military threat to Taiwan."[18] He added that the administration, will soon decide on a "near-term course of action on how to address Taiwan's fighter gap, including through the sale to Taiwan of an undetermined number of new US-made fighter aircraft."[19] During interviews with the author, Taiwan authorities—irrespective of political party affiliation—voiced an interest in new vertical and short take-off and landing (V/STOL) combat aircraft.

Secretary Campbell has suggested that U.S. "security ties with Taiwan are perhaps the most high-profile element of the US-Taiwan relationship."[20] However, critical elements of this relationship remain low-profile. For example, the two sides appear to have long enjoyed a "cooperative intelligence-sharing agreement" whereby the U.S. National Security Agency and the ROC National Security Bureau monitor PRC military communications from a facility that was jointly constructed on Yangmingshan Mountain north of Taipei.[21] Some speculate that the pivot may have led to an increase in intelligence cooperation. According to media reports, Taiwan may share data acquired through its new US$1.3 billion long-range early-warning radar (EWR) system in Hsinchu with the US military.[22]

On July 12, 2012, Raymond Burghardt, AIT Chairman, outlined some "discrete" ways in which Washington and Taipei are moving closer.

"We now have regular consultations at senior levels between both civilian and military representatives, but you don't read about this. Part of the price we pay for conducting the relationship with Taiwan discreetly is that you give people a reason to write that you are abandoning them. The fact is that we are having high-level meetings with Taiwan leaders. [Military relations are] very strong and very good. There is intelligence exchange; there are mutual assessments of defense needs; there is training that goes on. We don't talk about this stuff. Again, discretion is our biggest enemy. Maybe we should talk about it more. The military relationship is so much more than arms sales It's a good relationship and it has been strengthened a lot with more channels, more issues to work on, and more plans for collaboration," he said.[23]

Despite such sentiments, Burghardt often remains tight-lipped about the murky security relationship with Taipei. During his February, 2013, visit to Taiwan, the director would say only that his meetings focused on security issues and that his visit to a Patriot missile site and the Taipei Regional Control Center "symbolized my reasons for being here."[24] Commenting on the reluctance of U.S. and ROC officials to openly discuss growing security linkages, Deputy Minister Yang explained, "we are not hiding from the media, but, you know, its based on the need to know."[25] He warned that trumpeting recent progress in security ties would antagonize Beijing.

In addition to an increase in bilateral security ties, Taiwan stands to gain indirectly from the pivot. The ROC Ministry of National Defense (MND)

welcomes plans to reallocate US naval forces from a roughly 50/50 percent split between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to a 60/40 percent split favoring the Pacific. A MND spokesperson explained that "the MND welcomes any measure conducive to peace and stability in the region."[26] The new reallocation might benefit Taiwan during an emergency. Moreover, Taiwan's security could be bolstered by an effort to ramp up missile defenses. The United States will deploy two additional sophisticated X-Band radar systems in the Western Pacific—one in southern Japan and the other in Southeast Asia (probably the Philippines). Although officials claim the new systems reflect concerns about Pyongyang, they may also track developments around Taiwan (Beijing has deployed over 1,200 ballistic missiles directly opposite Taiwan). As Jeffrey Lewis, director of the Monterey Institute of International Studies' East Asia non-proliferation program, observed, "if you're putting one (X-band radar system) in southern Japan and one in the Philippines, you're sort of bracketing Taiwan. So it does look like you're making sure that you can put a missile defense cap over the Taiwanese."[27]

In addition to the radar systems, the Pentagon has taken note of China's "carrier killing" missile systems and pledged that "*the U.S. military will invest as required to ensure its ability to operate effectively in anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) environments* [italics in original document]."[28] The U.S. military also plans to counter PRC advances in cyber warfare and will "*invest in advanced capabilities to defend its networks, operational capability, and resiliency in cyberspace and space* (italics in original document)."[29] These commitments will help ensure that the United States can respond to an emergency in the Taiwan Strait and thereby enhance deterrence.

CONCLUSIONS

The pivot to Asia could yield dividends for Taiwan. The rebalancing might help Taipei find a way to avoid economic marginalization in the global marketplace. If Taiwan continues to liberalize its economy, the multi-party democracy will be a prime candidate for TPP membership. The pivot may also help Taiwan elevate its diplomatic profile. If the United States boosts political ties with Taiwan, it is likely that other states will follow its lead.[30] Finally, a

robust commitment to Taipei's defense along with a determination to counter Beijing's military build-up may enhance deterrence and thereby boost Taiwan's security. It could also increase Taiwan's bargaining position during discussions with the Chinese mainland and enable the island to negotiate from a position of strength. As Dr. Andrew Yang, ROC Deputy Minister of Defense, explained, U.S. military support for Taiwan "is vitally important to facilitate peaceful engagement between the two sides."[31]

To be sure, it appears that Taiwan stands to benefit in some ways from the pivot. But the change in policy may also represent challenges for the ROC. The new U.S. strategy could generate unintended consequences. Paradoxical as it may seem, some warn that the pivot—an initiative intended to promote stability—might increase the likelihood for conflict and turmoil in the Western Pacific.

As Robert S. Ross observed, the current administration has junked longstanding policy and "directly inserted the U.S." into "legally complex disputes" over a number of "inconsequential islands" located in South China Sea.[32] Washington is also leaning toward Tokyo in a row over uninhabited islands in the East China Sea. At the same time, the United States has "unnecessarily challenged Beijing by boosting its military presence on the East Asian mainland" and by inking numerous military agreements with China's neighbors.[33]

Not surprisingly, China has "pushed back" against U.S. policies, and could refuse to cooperate "on crucial issues from trade to global economic stability."[34] This may represent a worrisome problem for the global community. Moreover, an overt or highly visible increase in U.S. support for Taiwan might also lead Beijing to "push back" against *both* Washington and Taipei. After all, the Chinese mainland is watching developments closely. As one editorial in a PRC newspaper opined, "we should be alert to any change in the U.S. policy toward Taiwan."[35]

In the final analysis, it would be difficult to predict how the U.S. pivot to the Asia-Pacific plays out. It could conceivably benefit Taiwan. On the other hand, like other Asian governments, Taipei might suffer some "collateral damage" if present trends in U.S.-China relations continue. It is possible that the U.S. pivot might prove to be yet another problem—not a solution to regional difficulties.

NOTES

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2. See Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, November 2011, on the world wide web at http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century
3. See Shirley A. Kan, *Taiwan: Major US Arms Sales Since 1990*, (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, March 7, 2012), p.32.
4. Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments involving the People's Republic of China*, (Washington, DC: US Department of Defense, May 2012), pp.22–24.
5. William Lowther, "Taiwan 'Focus' of Chinese Military Modernization," *Taipei Times*, May 20, 2012, p.1, on the world wide web at at http://www.taipeitimes.com.
6. Author's interview with Dr. Joseph Wu, Democratic Progressive Party Headquarters, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, December 24, 2012. Tape recording.
7. See Opening Statement of Representative Ros-Lehtinen (R.FL), before the US House Foreign Affairs Committee in *Why Taiwan Matters*, Part II, October 4, 2011,p.10, on the world wide web at http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/, p.2.
8. See testimony of Kurt M. Campbell, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, US Department of State, in Ibid.
9. Hillary Rodham Clinton, *America's Pacific Century, Remarks, East-West Center, Honolulu, HI*, November 10, 2011, US Department of State, on the world wide web at http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/11/176999.htm.
10. William Lowther, "US has 'strengthened' relationship with Taiwan: Clinton," *Taipei Times*, March 9, 2012, on the world wide web at www.taipeitimes.com.
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12. Author's interview with Dr. Andrew Yang, ROC Deputy Minister of National Defense, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, December 24, 2012. Tape recording.
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14. See Helen Ku, "US, Taiwan to Resume TIFA Talks," *Taipei Times*, February 2, 2013, p.1, on the world wide web at http://www.taipeitimes.com.
15. See William Lowther, "Taiwan Still a Top Buyer of US Arms," *Taipei Times*, December 22, 2011, p.2, on the world wide webat http://www.Taipeitimes.com.
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20. See Testimony of Kurt M. Campbell, Assistant Secretary of the US Department of State's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs in *Why Taiwan Matters*, Part II
21. See Wendell Minnick, "Spook Mountain: How the US Spies on China," *Asia Times*, March 6, 2003 on the www at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/EC06Ad03.html.
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25. Author's interview with Dr. Andrew Yang, ROC Deputy Minister of National Defense, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, December 24, 2012. Tape recording.
26. "Gov't Welcomes US Plan for More Warships in Asia," *China Post*, June 4, 2012, on the world wide web at http://www.chinapost.com.tw.
27. See William Lowther, "Taiwan Stands to Gain from US Military Plans," *Taipei Times*, August 25, 2012, on the world wide web at http://www.taipeitimes.com.
28. See US Department of Defense, *Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for the 21st Century Defense*.
29. Ibid.
30. For example, when the US allowed Taiwan to upgrade the names of its "unofficial" representative offices in the US during the 1990s, other states quickly followed. On the other hand, when Washington downgrades relations, other states also downgrade ties.
31. Author's interview with Dr. Andrew Yang, ROC Deputy Minister of National Defense, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, December 24, 2012. Tape Recording.
32. See Robert S. Ross, "The Problem with the Pivot: Obama's New Asia Policy is Unnecessary and Counterproductive," *China US Focus*, December 6, 2012, on the world wide web at http://www.chinausfocus.com/print/?id+21980. Also see Michael D. Swaine, "America's Asia Pivot Threatens Regional Stability," *The National Interest*, December 7, 2011, on the world wide web at http://nationalinterest.org.
33. Ibid
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Partner in the Pivot?

JAMES R. HOLMES

Apathy kills. The Obama administration's pivot to Asia—a politico-military endeavor that combines strategic mass, strategic maneuver, and geography in intensely competitive surroundings—may well bolster Taiwan's security vis-à-vis the mainland. Yet the pivot's capacity to dissuade or defeat China hinges on whether U.S. Navy relief forces can reach the island's vicinity, do battle, and prevail at a cost acceptable to the American state and society. This is an open question—but one that Taiwan's armed forces can, and must, help answer in the affirmative. The island must bear a vigorous hand in its defense rather than passively awaiting rescue. Otherwise it may stand alone in its hour of need.

GET SERIOUS

Taiwan, then, must think of itself as a partner in as well as a beneficiary of the United States' strategic pirouette. Why? Because the remorseless logic of self-help, whereby nation-states bear primary responsibility for their own defense, still rules international affairs. And because appearances count in alliance politics. A lesser ally that covets help from a stronger one must demonstrate that it merits the effort, lest the strong stand aside during a crisis. Taipei's performance is suspect in both military and diplomatic terms. Defense budgets, a rough gauge of political resolve, have dwindled from already meager levels. Military spending stood at 2.2 percent of GDP in 2012, down from 3.8 percent in 1994.[1]

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For comparison's sake, 2 percent of GDP constitutes NATO's benchmark for defense expenditures.[2] Taiwan barely meets the standard fixed by an alliance whose members face no threat. This is not the behavior of an ally serious about its defense.

Taipei thus remains on a peacetime footing even as the cross-strait military balance tilts more and more lopsidedly toward the mainland. Its armed forces' capacity to withstand assailants long enough for U.S. forces to reach the theater is increasingly doubtful. Only by conspicuously upgrading its defenses can the island's leadership help a U.S. president justify the costs and hazards of ordering increasingly scarce, and thus increasingly precious, forces into battle against a peer competitor. Otherwise the American people and their elected officials may ask why they should risk vital interests for the sake of an ally that appears unwilling to help itself.

Granted, this is a dark picture to paint at a time when knowledgeable observers proclaim that peace has broken out in the Taiwan Strait. But think about it. The United States' superpower status—among the most vital of vital interests—hinges on sea power. Losing a major part of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in an afternoon would set back the republic's standing in the world. Even in victory, a costly encounter could carry dire consequences for both the United States and the global order over which its sea services preside.

In short, U.S. presidents can no longer blithely send forces into combat in the Western Pacific. It is no longer 1995–1996, when the Clinton administration dispatched two aircraft-carrier task forces to the island's vicinity to deter Chinese aggression during presidential elections. The prospective adversary is far more capable, the costs of battle mounting in relative terms. After all, each ship or aircraft lost in combat constitutes a bigger proportion of a smaller force. Beijing is counting on the increasing "lumpiness" of U.S. military capital to help dissuade Washington from involving itself in a cross-strait war.

The decision will be doubly difficult if Taiwan seems indifferent to its own security—indeed, to its own political survival. The island must help America pivot to the region rather than assume help will automatically arrive during times of strife.

COMPETING TO MOLD WASHINGTON'S COST/ BENEFIT CALCULUS

Theory helps clarify such matters. Strategic theorist Carl von Clausewitz urges statesmen and commanders to impose rationality on international strife—an arena for chance, "friction," and dark passions—as best they may. The value of the political object, writes Clausewitz, should govern the magnitude and duration of the effort a belligerent puts forth to gain that object. In other words, how much importance a combatant attaches to its goals determines how many resources—lives, weaponry, treasure—it should expend on the undertaking, and for how long.[3] It is the price a belligerent is willing to pay.

Should the costs come to exceed the likely gains, adds Clausewitz, the leadership should write off its losses and exit the conflict as gracefully as possible.[4] Such hardscrabble logic should trouble Taipei, raising the prospect of American abandonment. And it gets worse. No enthusiast for alliances, Clausewitz adds laconically that "One country may support another's cause, but will never take it so seriously as it takes its own. A moderately-sized force will be sent to its help; but if things go wrong the operation is pretty well written off, and one tries to withdraw at the smallest cost."[5]

Allied commitments, that is, are typically tepid. Harvard professor Steve Walt maintains that common interests and threats, cultural and social affinities, and incentives or coercion furnished by the leading partner can bind together alliances and coalitions.[6] If so, his taxonomy offers scant comfort for Taipei.

Consider. The same things are not at stake for Taiwan and the United States in East Asia. Washington must uphold regionwide and global interests while keeping the peace in the Strait. Taipei concerns itself mainly with cross-strait relations. Taipei clearly cannot pay off or compel Washington to fight on its behalf. That leaves sympathy for a fellow democracy under threat as the chief motive impelling the United States to intervene. Yet Walt declares that social and cultural affinities are relatively weak adhesives.[7] Doubtless Clausewitz would agree.

To bias a stronger patron's cost/benefit calculus in favor of military intervention, accordingly, a lesser ally like Taiwan must shoulder as much of the burden as it can, demonstrating it remains a going concern while keeping

down the costs to its ally. To help the United States pivot to its defense, Taiwan must demonstrate that the fight will not be too costly or take too long. Showing the American people and their leaders that they can advance a worthy but secondary—for them—cause at an acceptable price will ease Washington's decision to intervene.

In effect Taipei must counter a reciprocal Chinese effort to shape U.S. calculations. Beijing hopes to persuade Washington it will take a protracted, bloody struggle to keep Taiwan independent, and that the island isn't worth the costs and dangers. In Clausewitzian terms, Beijing's "anti-access/area-denial" strategy will drive up the magnitude and duration of any effort to intervene across the Pacific Ocean. To see how this strategy works, consider what the military pivot *is*. It is a foreign-policy enterprise by which U.S. joint forces concentrate for action in remote theaters. The military must mass strategically significant quantities of manpower and armaments in a contested theater like the Far East, surmounting both transoceanic distances and regional antagonists' attempts to veto intervention.

That it can do so is hardly a foregone conclusion, notwithstanding hopeful claims that U.S. forces remain overwhelmingly superior at sea and aloft, and that China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) trails far behind in numbers, technological sophistication, and human prowess.[8]

Respect for prospective foes is a healthier attitude. Clausewitz warns statesmen and commanders not to assume the red team is some inert object on which the blue team can work its will. The opponent is a living, thinking agent determined to thwart the blue team's strategy. It means to prevail in the "collision of two living forces," or continual grappling for strategic advantage, that impels competition and conflict among nations.[9]

True to Clausewitzian logic, China has fashioned a maritime strategy meant to erect a "contested zone" in the Western Pacific, raising the costs of forcible entry into the region.[10] Indeed, the Chinese Communist way of war is premised precisely on wearing out and turning the tables on a superior adversary fighting far from home. Maoist strategy envisioned luring an enemy in deep, letting him overextend and exhaust himself—much as a "savvy boxer" gave ground at the outset of a bout while readying a devastating counterpunch.[11] Picking off hard-to-replace ships, aircraft, and armaments as the U.S. Pacific Fleet lumbered toward Asia would compel

Washington to consider the larger repercussions of fighting for a secondary object like Taiwan. The rational cost/benefit calculus could well bias Washington against undertaking such a campaign.

The PLA, then, need not defeat U.S. expeditionary forces outright to exact unbearable costs. Clausewitz observes that there are two routes to victory apart from the obvious one, namely overthrowing the enemy on the battlefield or unseating his regime. One antagonist can convince the other he cannot win, or that the price of winning is too steep.[12] Anti-ship missiles, diesel submarines, shore-based tactical aircraft, and fast patrol craft are some implements by which Beijing can impose heavy losses on U.S. Navy reinforcements steaming to the relief of Asian allies—and thus inflate the price of victory.[13] These implements are already in the PLA inventory. Their numbers are swelling by the day.

Grasping the perils posed by anti-access strategy, a U.S. president might hesitate before committing forces to combat—or forego the venture altogether. If so, the PLA will have delayed or interrupted the pivot, isolating Taiwan militarily for long enough to fulfill its purposes.

A STRATEGIC PIVOT FOR TAIWAN

What to do? In a sense Taipei needs to undertake a pivot of its own, aimed at ensuring that its chief protector can, and will, come to its aid in wartime. Two general recommendations: Taiwan needs to spend more, and it needs to spend wisely. Spending more on defense is about more than amassing capabilities to help right the cross-strait military balance, important though that is. Demonstrating fortitude is as important as backing strategy with steel. GDP figures offer a simple, readily intelligible index for Taiwan's commitment to its independence. A U.S. president could use such indicators to persuade American constituents the island merits the expense, loss of life, and hazards of war. Islanders who show pluck look like a good cause. Americans would rally to Taiwan's defense, just as they rallied to Great Britain's defense seventy years ago.

Spending wisely means devising strategy whereby Taiwan's armed forces hold out long enough for U.S. forces to pierce Chinese anti-access

defenses. Taipei long thought in offensive terms, assuming its navy and air force could command the seas and skies, outmatching a large but backward PLA. Command is no longer tenable. Nevertheless, all is not lost. Executed smartly, a strategically defensive posture would harden Taiwan against assault while turning the logic of anti-access to its advantage. If China can ratchet up the costs and hardships for a superior U.S. military surging into its nautical environs, Taiwan can replicate its approach on the micro level—punishing superior PLA forces along its shorelines. On land, dug-in anti-ship and anti-air missile sites could take a high toll from an amphibious assault force. Swarms of light combatants could wage guerrilla warfare at sea, rendering nearby waters and skies a no-go zone for invaders.

Such active defense measures would grant the island and its protector a precious commodity, time. Furthermore, commanders could deploy such residual offensive air and sea assets as the armed forces retained to the island's east. Clearing a corridor of PLA anti-access forces would lighten the burden on the U.S. Pacific Fleet—reducing American combat losses while holding down the magnitude of the effort required simply to reach the theater. In short, boosting the means available for Taiwan's defense while aligning these means with strategy befitting the weak would turn cost/benefit logic in favor of allied solidarity. And the allies' joint pivot would be complete.

NOTES

1. Shirley Kan, *Taiwan: Major Arms Sales since 1990* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, November29, 2012), esp. pp. 33–35.
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6. Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," *International Security* 9, no. 4 (spring 1985): pp. 3–43.
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